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VOICES OF NATURE

A SEQUEL TO
PRAISE OF A SIMPLE LIFE

EDITED BY
ERNEST A. BAKER

Come and make thy calm retreat
Among green leaves and blossoms sweet.
BLAKE.

LONDON
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD.
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea, that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

WORDSWORTH.

Gift
Grace L. + Abbyl. Sargent
11-3-1931

PREFACE

AS explained in the preface to *Praise of a Simple Life*, the contents of this little book were to have formed, not a sequel, but the latter portion of an anthology of passages from the earliest to the latest times, extolling that eternal dream of mankind, a life according to the simple laws of Nature. But the great divergency that obtruded itself between the earlier and the later ways of regarding Nature and Man detracted so much from the unity of the collection, that it seemed more satisfactory to put the ancients and the moderns in separate volumes.

There were Nature-worshippers before Wordsworth, as the former volume shows well enough. Men have always felt the call, though they have felt it differently. And they have expressed their emotions very differently. Only at times in the other volume is there a direct lyrical utterance, a spontaneous cry from the heart, without reflection and without analysis. Most often the tone is consciously didactic, or at any rate philosophical: many of the pieces are simply moral lessons in

rhyme. The general difference between the old gospel and the new is the difference between theology and faith, between dogma and worship. Before the throne of Nature men were not content to submit their souls to this inscrutable impulsion without trying to rationalise their instincts. Wishing to conduct themselves like philosophers, they must formulate rules and combine rules into systems. Inarticulate whisperings had no meaning for them. But more meaningless still are the dogmas given in exchange for faith, the abstract formulas proffered in lieu of a religion of the heart. Rasselas turns away in disgust from the sage who pompously informs him that 'to live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things'.

Wordsworth, Barnes, and Borrow are not concerned to teach improving lessons, to reduce their faith within the compass of thirty-nine articles. But they have revealed a temper, a passion, an attitude of soul, that affect us infinitely more profoundly than the generalities devoid of ponderable meaning which Johnson resented. And it follows that the task of the anthologist is a difficult one—to find rounded, concise, detachable utterances of

a feeling which, at the intensest, is incommunicable and unspoken. The reader will ask why there is so little here from Tennyson, from Browning, from Clough, William Morris, and Swinburne. Heard they none of these voices? Had they, unlike all other poets, no adoration for the simplicity, the purity, the divinity of Nature? The question needs no answer. But this was seldom their selected theme. The most splendid part of their poetry was inspired pre-eminently by the complex drama of human life—the drama of conduct, of heroism, of passion, or, as in the case of Clough, the drama of thought. It is in poems of happy contemplation and placid reverie, and in the idyll, that we look for the deliberate expression of this homelier and purer feeling. Yet, perhaps, the most moving statement in English literature of this simple faith are the words of one who lived no such life himself, and whose voice is laden with an infinite burden of sadness and regret. Immersed and buffeted in the complex currents of our modern life, Matthew Arnold in *The Scholar Gipsy* declares his longing for the peace that Nature gives, the innocent trust of an age that knew not the delirium of emancipation and doubt and progress.

It would be a mistake to generalise too far, and say that our later English literature never touches on this theme analytically and didactically. Minor

poets like Southey and Eliza Cook will be found to have indited their moralising lessons in the same neat rhymes as their predecessors in the two centuries before. And the American writers who are quoted fall naturally into a distinct group by reason of this very propensity. In the devout Bryant, the didactic Whittier, the transcendental Emerson, the philosophic Thoreau, and again in the reflective essays of our contemporary John Burroughs—all of whom owe as much to the prose philosophers as to their common ancestor Wordsworth—we find Nature-worship enunciated most clearly and definitely as a creed.

The Editor offers his hearty thanks to the following for granting him permission to include selections from the works mentioned: Messrs. Macmillan and Co. (Barnes's *Poems of Rural Life*), Mr. Horatio F. Brown (*Lebens Philosophie*, by J. A. Symonds), Messrs. Wm. Blackwood and Sons (two excerpts from George Eliot), Messrs. Duckworth and Co. (*The Grey Brethren*, by Michael Fairless), Mrs. Romanes (*Simple Nature*, by the late G. J. Romanes), Mr. Elkin Mathews (*Poems*, by W. Bell Scott), Messrs. Smith, Elder, and Co. (*The Gamekeeper at Home*, by Richard Jefferies), and Messrs. George Allen and Sons (Cory's *Ionica*). The following authors have also

generously allowed extracts to be made from their works: Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Watts-Dunton, Mr. John Burroughs, Mr. Edward Carpenter, the late Sir Lewis Morris, and Mr. Samuel Waddington; and the Editor is deeply grateful to them. He regrets that for reasons of copyright it was not permissible to include more than one short piece from Ruskin—a serious omission—anything from Christina Rossetti or Stevenson, and—worst of all—anything from Mr. Meredith. None has expressed so nobly or so clearly, either in verse or prose, as our greatest living novelist what one might almost call this modern theology of the simple, natural life, this truth that 'through Nature only can we ascend'.

Earth your haven, Earth your helm,
You command a double realm;
Labouring here to pay your debt,
Till your little sun shall set;
Leaving her the future task:
Loving her too well to ask.

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I

THE RETURN TO NATURE

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

WORDSWORTH

'My Heart Leaps Up'

MY heart leaps up when I behold
A Rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

Expostulation and Reply

'WHY, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

'Where are your books?—that light bequeathed
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

'You look round on your mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!'

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

'The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against, or with our will.

'Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

'Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

'Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away'.

The Tables Turned

UP! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland Linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the Throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up these barren leaves:
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

Daffodils by Ullswater

I WANDERED lonely as a Cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden Daffodils;
Beside the Lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:—
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the Daffodils.

The Reverie of Poor Susan

AT the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years:
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures, she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail;
And a single small Cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade:
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

A Poet

BUT who is he, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,—
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

Lines

Written in Early Spring

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwrinkle trailed its wreaths ;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played ;
Their thoughts I cannot measure :—
But the least motion that they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

From Heaven if this belief be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

To the Daisy

I

IN youth from rock to rock I went,
From hill to hill in discontent
Of pleasure high and turbulent,
Most pleased when most uneasy;
But now my own delights I make,—
My thirst at every rill can slake,
And gladly Nature's love partake
Of thee, sweet Daisy!

Thee Winter in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few grey hairs;
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee;

Whole summer-fields are thine by right;
And Autumn, melancholy wight!
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane,
Pleased at his greeting thee again;
Yet nothing daunted,
Nor grieved, if thou be set at nought:
And oft alone in nooks remote
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose;
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
Her head impearling.
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
Yet hast not gone without thy fame;
Thou art indeed by many a claim
The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
Or, some bright day of April sky,
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
Near the green holly,

And wearily at length should fare;
He needs but look about, and there
Thou art!—a friend at hand, to scare
His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
Have I derived from thy sweet power
Some apprehension;
Some steady love; some brief delight;
Some memory that had taken flight;
Some chime of fancy wrong or right;
Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
And one chance look to thee should turn,
I drink out of an humbler urn
A lowlier pleasure;
The homely sympathy that heeds
The common life our nature breeds;
A wisdom fitted to the needs
Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh smitten by the morning ray,
When thou art up, alert and gay,
Then, cheerful Flower! my spirits play
With kindred gladness:

And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
Hath often eased my pensive breast
Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt,
Which I, wherever thou art met,
To thee am owing;
An instinct call it, a blind sense;
A happy, genial influence,
Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run
Thy course, bold lover of the sun,
And cheerful when the day's begun
As lark or leveret,
Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain
Nor be less dear to future men
Than in old time; thou not in vain
Art Nature's favourite.

II

Bright flower, whose home is everywhere!
A Pilgrim bold in Nature's care,
And oft, the long year through, the heir
Of joy or sorrow;

Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
    The forest thorough!

And wherefore? Man is soon deprest;
A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,
Does little on his memory rest,
    Or on his reason;
But Thou would'st teach him how to find
A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind
    And every season.

Thou wander'st the wild world about,
Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
With friends to greet thee, or without,
    Yet pleased and willing;
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
And all things suffering from all,
Thy function apostolical
    In peace fulfilling.

To a Skylark

UP with me! up with me into the clouds!
    For thy song, lark, is strong;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds!

Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
And to-day my heart is weary,
Had I now the wings of a Faery,
Up to thee would I fly.
There's madness about thee, and joy divine
In that song of thine;
Lift me, guide me, high and high
To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning,
Thou art laughing and scorning;
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken Lark, thou would'st be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy Liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain River
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,
Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind,
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,

As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
And hope for higher raptures when Life's day is done.

To my Sister

Written at a small distance from my House, and sent by my little Boy

IT is the first mild day of March:
Each minute sweeter than before,
The Redbreast sings from the tall Larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My Sister! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you;—and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress;
And bring no book: for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living Calendar:
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now an universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth:
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than fifty years of reason:
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey:
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls:
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress;
—And bring no book: for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

To a Young Lady

Who had been reproached for taking
long Walks in the Country

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail!
—There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbour and a hold;
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
Thy own delightful days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a Shepherd-boy,
And treading among flowers of joy
Which at no season fade,
Thou, while thy Babes around thee cling,
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

Lines

Composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the banks of the Wye during a tour, July 13, 1798

FIVE years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.*—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
Among the woods and copses, nor disturb
The wild green landscape. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem

* The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern.

Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.
These beauteous Forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power

Of harmony, and the deep power of joy.
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,
In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye ! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee !
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again ;
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led ; more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,

And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite ; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur ; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains ; and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive ; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river ; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend ; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy : for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all

The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance—
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to be
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

The Solitary Reaper

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chant
So sweetly to reposing bands
Of Travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands;
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened till I had my fill,
And when I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

Lucy

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine is too the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

'Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

'She shall be sportive as the Fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

'The floating Clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

'The Stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where Rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

'And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy Dell.'

Thus Nature spake—the work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
  Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
  And very few to love:

A Violet by a mossy stone
  Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
  Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
  When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
  The difference to me!

A slumber did my spirit seal;
  I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
  The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
  She neither hears nor sees,
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
  With rocks, and stones, and trees.

It is a Beauteous Evening

IT is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
  The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;

The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

After-thought to the Duddon Sonnets

I THOUGHT of thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away. Vain sympathies!
For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;
The Form remains, the Function never dies;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish;—be it so?
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.

SOUTHEY

The Holly Tree

O READER! hast thou ever stood to see
The Holly Tree?
The eye that contemplates it well perceives
Its glossy leaves
Order'd by an intelligence so wise,
As might confound the Atheist's sophistries.

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
Wrinkled and keen;
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
Can reach to wound;
But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarm'd the pointless leaves appear.

I love to view these things with curious eyes,
And moralize:
And in this wisdom of the Holly Tree
Can emblems see
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,
One which may profit in the aftertime.

Thus, though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere,

To those who on my leisure would intrude
Reserved and rude,
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

And should my youth, as youth is apt I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

And as when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The Holly leaves a sober hue display
Less bright than they,
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the Holly Tree?

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem among the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly Tree.

My Days among the Dead are Passed

MY days among the dead are past ;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old ;
My never failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe ;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thankful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead, with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead, anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them will travel on
Through all Futurity :
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

CAROLINE BOWLES (MRS. SOUTHEY)

The Primrose

I SAW it in my evening walk,
A little lonely flower!
Under a hollow bank it grew,
Deep in a mossy bower.

An oak's gnarl'd root, to roof the cave
With Gothic fretwork sprung,
Whence jewell'd fern, and arum leaves,
And ivy garlands hung.

And from beneath came sparkling out
From a fallen tree's old shell,
A little rill, that clipt about
The lady in her cell.

And there, methought, with bashful pride,
She seem'd to sit and look
On her own maiden loveliness
Pale imaged in the brook.

No other flower—no rival grew
Beside my pensive maid;
She dwelt alone, a cloister'd nun,
In solitude and shade.

No sunbeam on that fairy well
  Darted its dazzling light—
Only, methought, some clear, cold star
  Might tremble there at night.

No ruffling wind could reach her there—
  No eye, methought, but mine,
Or the young lamb's that came to drink,
  Had spied her secret shrine.

And there was pleasantness to me
  In such belief. Cold eyes
That slight dear Nature's lowliness,
  Profane her mysteries.

Long time I looked and lingered there,
  Absorb'd in still delight—
My spirit drank deep quietness
  In, with that quiet sight.

COLERIDGE

Solitude

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell! O'er stiller place
No singing skylark ever poised himself.
The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,

Which now blooms most profusely: but the dell,
Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal cornfield, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at eve,
The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
Oh! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook!
Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly he,
The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
Knew just so much of folly, as had made
His early manhood more securely wise!
Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,
While from the singing lark (that sings unseen
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best),
And from the sun, and from the breezy air,
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame;
And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religious meanings in the forms of Nature!
And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
And dreaming hears thee still, O singing lark;
That singest like an angel in the clouds!

The Eolian Harp

MY pensive Sara! thy soft cheek reclined
Thus on my arm, most soothing sweet it is
To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown

With white-flowered Jasmin, and the broad-leaved
Myrtle,
(Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love!)
And watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,
Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve
Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
Shine opposite! How exquisite the scents
Snatched from yon bean-field! and the world so
hushed!
The stilly murmur of the distant sea
Tells us of silence.
And that simplest lute,
Placed length-ways in the clasping casement, hark!
How by the desultory breeze caressed,
Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover,
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
Tempt to repeat the wrong! And now, the strings
Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from Fairy-Land,
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed wing!
O! the one life within us and abroad,
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light,
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere—

Methinks it should have been impossible
Not to love all things in a world so filled;
Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
Is Music slumbering on her instrument.

And thus, my love! as on the midway slope
Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
Whilst through my half-closed eye-lids I behold
The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main,
And tranquil muse upon tranquillity;
Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
And many idle flitting phantasies,
Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
As wild and various as the random gales
That swell and flutter on this subject lute!

And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each, and God of all?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
Darts, O beloved woman! nor such thoughts
Dim and unhallowed, dost thou not reject,
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
Meek daughter in the family of Christ!
Well hast thou said and holily dispraised
These shapings of the unregenerate mind;

Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
For never guiltless may I speak of Him,
The incomprehensible! save when with awe
I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels:
Who with his saving mercies healed me,
A sinful and most miserable man,
Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this cot, and thee, dear honoured Maid!

Coleridge to his Child

DEAR Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore,
And in far other scenes! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But *thou*, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores

And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great Universal Teacher! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

O Lady! we receive but what we give

O LADY! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold of higher worth
Than that inanimate cold world allowed

To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
  Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
  Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
  A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.
  Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower
  A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
  We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
  All melodies the echo of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

ROBERT TANNAHILL

Midges dance aboon the burn

THE midges dance aboon the burn;
The dews begin to fa';
The pairtricks down the rushy holm
Set up their e'ening ca'.
Now loud and clear the blackbird's sang
Rings through the briery shaw,
While flitting gay, the swallows play
Around the castle wa'.

Beneath the golden gloamin' sky
The mavis mends her lay;
The redbreast pours his sweetest strains
To charm the ling'ring day;
While weary yeldrins seem to wail
Their little nestlings torn,
The merry wren, frae den to den,
Gaes jinking through the thorn.

The roses fauld their silken leaves,
The foxglove shuts its bell;
The honeysuckle and the birk
Spread fragrance through the dell.
Let others crowd the giddy court
Of mirth and revelry,
The simple joys that Nature yields
Are dearer far to me.

HOGG

The Skylark

BIRD of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be the matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
O to abide in the desert with thee!

Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud,
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
Where, on thy dewy wing,
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and mountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!

Then, when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms,
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place,
O to abide in the desert with thee!

LEIGH HUNT

The Grasshopper and the Cricket

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;
Oh sweet and tiny cousins, that belong
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both though small are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To ring in thoughtful ears this natural song—
In doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

Abou Ben Adhem and the Angel

ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,

An angel writing in a book of gold :—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?'—The vision rais'd its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answer'd, 'The names of those who love the Lord'.
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still ; and said, 'I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'

The angel wrote, and vanish'd. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had
bless'd,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

KEATS

To one who has been long in city pent

TO one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair

And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
  Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
  He mourns that day so soon has glided by:
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

To Autumn

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
  Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
  With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
  And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
  To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
  For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
  Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
  Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;

Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook:
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

SHELLEY

The Invitation

BEST and brightest, come away
Fairer far than this fair day,
Which like thee to those in sorrow
Comes to bid a sweet good morrow

To the rough year just awake
In its cradle on the brake.
The brightest hour of unborn spring,
Through the winter wandering,
Found it seems the halcyon morn,
To hoar February born;
Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,
It kissed the forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free;
And waked to music all their fountains,
And breathed upon the frozen mountains,
And like a prophetess of May
Strewed flowers upon the barren way,
Making the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild woods and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonises heart to heart.
I leave this notice on my door
For each accustomed visitor:—
'I am gone into the fields
To take what this sweet hour yields;

Reflection, you may come to-morrow,
Sit by the fireside of Sorrow.—
You with the unpaid bill, Despair,
You, tiresome verse-reciter, Care,
I will pay you in the grave,
Death will listen to your stave.—
Expectation too, be off!
To-day is for itself enough;
Hope in pity mock not woe
With smiles, nor follow where I go;
Long having lived on thy sweet food,
At length I find one moment good
After long pain—with all your love,
This you never told me of.'

Radiant Sister of the Day,
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves,
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green, and ivy dun,
Round stems that never kiss the sun,
Where the lawns and pastures be,
And the sandhills of the sea,
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets,
And wind-flowers and violets,
Which yet join not scent to hue,

Crown the pale year weak and new;
When the night is left behind,
In the deep east, dim and blind,
And the blue noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet,
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one
In the universal sun.

BYRON

Converse with Nature

TO sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unroll'd.

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,

And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less,
Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene,
That he who there at such an hour hath been
Will wistful linger on that hallow'd spot;
Then slowly tear him from the 'witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,
Though always changing, in her aspect mild;
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-wean'd, though not her favour'd child.
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her path:
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have mark'd her when none other hath,
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

Clear placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wide world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been
so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the
shore,
Of flowers yet fresh from childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol
more:

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews

All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—
All heaven and earth are still: from the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,

There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

DE QUINCEY

Wandering in North Wales

THERE were already, even in those days of 1802, numerous inns, erected at reasonable distances from each other, for the accommodation of tourists: and no sort of disgrace attached in Wales, as too generally upon the great roads of England, to the pedestrian style of travelling. Indeed, the majority of those whom I met as fellow-tourists in the quiet little cottage-parlours of the Welsh posting-houses were pedestrian travellers. All the way from Shrewsbury through Llangollen, Llanrwst, Conway, Bangor, and then turning to the left at right angles through Carnarvon, and so on to Dolgelly (the chief town of Merionethshire), Tan y Bwlch, Harlech, Barmouth, and through the sweet solitudes of Cardiganshire, or turning sharply back towards the English border through the gorgeous wood scenery of Mont-

gomeryshire—everywhere at intermitting distances of twelve or sixteen miles, I found the most comfortable inns. One feature indeed of repose in all this chain of solitary resting-houses—viz., the fact that none of them rose above two storeys in height—was due to the modest scale on which the travelling system of the Principality had moulded itself in correspondence to the calls of England, which then (but be it remembered this *then* was in 1802, a year of peace) threw a very small proportion of her vast migratory population annually into this sequestered channel. No huge Babylonian centres of commerce towered into the clouds on these sweet sylvan routes: no hurricanes of haste, or fever-stricken armies of horses and flying chariots, tormented the echoes in these mountain recesses. And it has often struck me that a world-wearied man, who sought for the peace of monasteries separated from their gloomy captivity—peace and silence such as theirs combined with the large liberty of nature—could not do better than revolve amongst these modest inns in the five northern Welsh counties of Denbigh, Montgomery, Carnarvon, Merioneth, and Cardigan. Sleeping, for instance, and breakfasting at Carnarvon; then, by an easy nine-mile walk, going forwards to dinner at Bangor, thence to Aber—nine miles; or to Llanberris; and so on for ever, accomplishing seventy to ninety or one hundred miles in a

week. This, upon actual experiment, and for week after week, I found the most delightful of lives. Here was the eternal motion of winds and rivers, or of the Wandering Jew liberated from the persecution which compelled him to move, and turned his breezy freedom into a killing captivity. Happier life I cannot imagine than this vagrancy, if the weather were but tolerable, through endless successions of changing beauty, and towards evening a courteous welcome to a pretty rustic home—that having all the luxuries of a fine hotel, was at the same time liberated from the inevitable accompaniments of such hotels in great cities or at great travelling stations—viz., the tumult and uproar.

Human Fellowship

THE truth is, that at no time of my life have I been a person to hold myself polluted by the touch or approach of any creature that wore a human shape. I cannot suppose, I will not believe, that any creatures wearing the form of man or woman are so absolutely rejected and reprobate outcasts, that merely to talk with them inflicts pollution. On the contrary, from my very earliest youth, it has been my pride to converse familiarly, *more Socratico*, with all human beings—man, woman, and child—that chance might fling in my

way; for a philosopher should not see with the eyes of the poor limitary creature calling himself a man of the world, filled with narrow and self-regarding prejudices of birth and education, but should look upon himself as a catholic creature, and as standing in an equal relation to high and low, to educated and uneducated, to the guilty and the innocent.

MOTHERWELL

Melancholye

ADIEU! al vaine delightes
Of calm and moonshine nightes;
Adieu! al pleasant shade
That forests thicke have made;
Adieu! al musick swete
That little fountaynes poure,
When blythe theire waters greete
The lovesick lyly-flowre.

Adieu! the fragrant smel
Of flowres in boskye dell;
And all the merrie notes
That tril from smal birdes' throates:
Adieu! the gladsome lighte
Of Day, Morne, Noone, or E'en;
And welcome gloomy Nighte,
When not one star is seen.

Adieu ! the deafening noyse
Of cities, and the joyes
Of Fashioun's sicklie birth ;
Adieu ! al boysterous mirthe,
Al pageant, pompe, and state,
  And every flauntynge thing
To which the would-be-great
  Of earth in madness cling.

Come with me, Melancholye,
We'll live like eremites holie,
In some deepe uncouthe wild
Where sunbeame never smylde ;
Come with me, pale of hue,
  To some lone silent spot,
Where blossom never grewe,
  Which man hath quite forgot.

Come with thy thought-filled eye,
That notes no passer by,
And drouping solemne head,
Where phansyes strange are bred
And saddening thoughts doe brood,
  Which idly strive to borrow
A smyle to vaile thy moode
  Of heart-abyding sorrow.

Come to yon blasted mound
Of phantom-haunted ground,

Where spirits love to be ;
And list the moody glee
Of night-windes as they moane,
  And the ocean's sad replye
To the wild unhallowed tone
  Of the wandering sea-bird's cry.

There sit with me and keep
Vigil when al doe sleepe ;
And when the curfeu bell
Hath rung its mournfull knel,
Let us together blend
  Our mutual sighes and teares,
Or chaunt some metre penned,
  Of the joies of other yeares !

Or in cavern hoare and damp,
Lit by the glow-worm's lamp,
We'll muse on the dull theme
Of Life's heart-sickening dreame
Of Time's resistlesse powre—
  Of Hope's deceitful lips—
Of Beauty's short-livde houre—
  And Glory's dark eclipse !

Or, would'st thou rather chuse
This World's leaf to peruse,
Beneath some dripping vault
That scornes rude Time's assaulte ;

Whose close-ribbed arches still
  Frown in their green old age,
And stamp an awfull chill
  Upon that pregnant page?

Yes, thither let us turne,
To this Time-shattered urne,
And quaintly carved stone—
(Dim wrackes of ages gone;)
Here in this mouldering tomb
  We'll con that noblest truth,
The Flesh and Spirit's doome—
  Dust and Immortall Youthe.

They come! the merry summer months

THEY come! the merry summer months of
  Beauty, Song, and Flowers;
They come! the gladsome months that bring thick
  leafiness to bowers.
Up, up, my heart, and walk abroad, fling cark and
  care aside,
Seek silent hills, or rest thyself where peaceful
  waters glide;
Or underneath the shadow vast of patriarchal
  tree,
Scan through its leaves the cloudless sky in rapt
  tranquillity.

The grass is soft, its velvet touch is grateful to the hand,
And, like the kiss of maiden love, the breeze is sweet and bland;
The daisy and the buttercup are nodding courteously,
It stirs their blood with kindest love, to bless and welcome thee;
And mark how with thine own thin locks,—they now are silvery grey,—
That blissful breeze is wantoning, and whispering "Be gay!"

There is no cloud that sails along the ocean of yon sky
But hath its own winged mariners to give it melody:
Thou see'st their glittering fans outspread all gleaming like red gold,
And hark! with shrill pipe musical, their merry course they hold.
God bless them all, these little ones, who far above this earth
Can make a scoff of its mean joys, and vent a nobler mirth.

But soft! mine ear upcaught a sound, from yonder wood it came;
The spirit of the dim green glade did breathe his own glad name:—

Yes, it is he! the hermit bird, that apart from all
his kind
Slow spells his beads monotonous to the soft west-
ern wind;
Cuckoo! Cuckoo! he sings again,—his notes are
void of art,
But simplest strains do soonest sound the deep
founts of the heart!

Good Lord! it is a gracious boon for thought-
crazed wight like me
To smell again these summer flowers beneath this
summer tree!
To suck once more in every breath their little souls
away,
And feed my fancy with fond dreams of youth's
bright summer day,
When rushing forth like untamed colt, the reckless
truant boy
Wandered through green woods all day long, a
mighty heart of joy!

I'm sadder now, I have had cause; but O! I'm
proud to think
That each pure joy-fount loved of yore, I yet
delight to drink;—
Leaf, blossom, blade, hill, valley, stream, the calm
unclouded sky,
Still mingle music with my dreams as in the days
gone by.

When summer's loveliness and light fall round me
dark and cold,
I'll bear indeed life's heaviest curse,—a heart that
hath waxed old!

CLARE

Home Yearnings

O FOR that sweet, untroubled rest
That poets oft have sung!—
The babe upon its mother's breast,
The bird upon its young,
The heart asleep without a pain—
When shall I know that sleep again?

When shall I be as I have been
Upon my mother's breast—
Sweet Nature's garb of verdant green
To woo to perfect rest—
Love in the meadow, field and glen,
And in my native wilds again?

The sheep within the fallow field,
The herd upon the green,
The larks that in the thistle shield,
And pipe from morn to e'en—
O for the pasture, fields, and fen!
When shall I see such rest again?

I love the weeds along the fen,
  More sweet than garden flowers,
For freedom haunts the humble glen
  That blest my happiest hours.
Here prison injures health and me:
I love sweet freedom and the free.

The crows upon the swelling hills,
  The cows upon the lea,
Sheep feeding by the pasture rills,
  Are ever dear to me,
Because sweet freedom is their mate,
While I am lone and desolate.

I loved the winds when I was young,
  When life was dear to me;
I loved the song which Nature sung,
  Endearing liberty;
I loved the woods, the vale, the stream,
For there my boyhood used to dream.

There even toil itself was play;
  'Twas pleasure e'en to weep;
'Twas joy to think of dreams by day,
  The beautiful of sleep.
When shall I see the wood and plain,
And dream those happy dreams again?

My Early Home

HERE sparrows build upon the trees,
And stockdove hides her nest;
The leaves are winnowed by the breeze
Into a calmer rest;
The black-cap's song was very sweet
That used the rose to kiss;
It made the Paradise complete:
My early home was this.

The red-breast from the sweet briar bush
Drop't down to pick the worm;
On the horse-chestnut sang the thrush,
O'er the house where I was born;
The moonlight, like a shower of pearls,
Fell o'er this 'bower of bliss,'
And on the bench sat boys and girls:
My early home was this.

The old house stooped just like a cave,
Thatched o'er with mosses green;
Winter around the walls would rave,
But all was calm within;
The trees are here all green agen,
Here bees the flowers still kiss,
But flowers and trees seemed sweeter then:
My early home was this

The Wood-cutter's Night Song

WELCOME, red and roundy sun,
Dropping lowly in the west ;
Now my hard day's work is done,
I'm as happy as the best.

Joyful are the thoughts of home,
Now I'm ready for my chair,
So, till morrow-morning's come,
Bill and mittens, lie ye there !

Though to leave your pretty song,
Little birds, it gives me pain,
Yet to-morrow is not long,
Then I'm with you all again.

If I stop and stand about,
Well I know how things will be,
Judy will be looking out
Every now-and-then for me.

So fare-ye-well ! and hold your tongues,
Sing no more until I come ;
They're not worthy of your songs
That never care to drop a crumb.

All day long I love the oaks,
  But at nights, yon little cot,
Where I see the chimney smokes,
  Is by far the prettiest spot.

Wife and children all are there,
  To revive with pleasant looks,
Table ready set, and chair,
  Supper hanging on the hooks.

Soon as ever I get in,
  When my faggot down I fling,
Little prattlers they begin
  Teasing me to talk and sing.

Welcome, red and roundy sun,
  Dropping lowly in the west;
Now my hard day's work is done,
  I'm as happy as the best.

Joyful are the thoughts of home,
  Now I'm ready for my chair,
So, till morrow-morning's come,
  Bill and mittens, lie ye there!

After Reading in a Letter Proposals for Building a Cottage

BESIDE a runnel build my shed,
With stubbles cover'd o'er;
Let broad oaks o'er its chimney spread,
And grass-plats grace the door.

The door may open with a string,
So that it closes tight;
And locks would be a wasted thing,
To keep out thieves at night.

A little garden, not too fine,
Inclose with painted pales;
And woodbines, round the cot to twine,
Pin to the wall with nails.

Let hazels grow, and spindling sedge,
Bent bowering overhead;
Dig old man's beard from woodland hedge,
To twine a summer shade.

Beside the threshold sods provide,
And build a summer seat;
Plant sweet-briar bushes by its side,
And flowers that blossom sweet.

I love the sparrow's ways to watch
  Upon the cotter's sheds,
So here and there pull out the thatch,
  That they may hide their heads.

And as the sweeping swallows stop
  Their flights along the green,
Leave holes within the chimney-top
  To paste their nest between.

Stick shelves and cupboards round the hut,
  In all the holes and nooks ;
Nor in the corner fail to put
  A cupboard for the books.

Along the floor some sand I'll sift,
  To make it fit to live in ;
And then I'll thank ye for the gift,
  As something worth the giving.

The Vanities of Life

WHAT are life's joys and gains?
  What pleasures crowd its ways,
That man should take such pains
To seek them all his days?
Sift this untoward strife
On which the mind is bent:

See if this chaff of life
Is worth the trouble spent.

Is pomp thy heart's desire?
Is power thy climbing aim?
Is love thy folly's fire?
Is wealth thy restless game?
Pomp, power, love, wealth, and all
Time's touchstone shall destroy
And, like base coin, prove all
Vain substitutes for joy.

Dost think that pride exalts
Thyself in other eyes,
And hides thy folly's faults,
Which reason will despise?
Dost strut, and turn, and stride,
Like a walking weathercock?
The shadow by thy side
Will be thy ape, and mock.

Dost think that power's disguise
Can make thee mighty seem?
It may in folly's eyes,
But not in worth's esteem,
When all that thou canst ask,
And all that she can give,
Is but a paltry mask
Which tyrants wear and live.

Dost thou possess the dower
Of laws to spare or kill?
Call it not heavenly power
When but a tyrant's will.
Think what thy God would do,
And know thyself a fool,
Nor, tyrant-like, pursue
Where He alone can rule.

Dost think, when wealth is won,
Thy heart has its desire?
Hold ice up to the sun,
And wax before the fire;
Nor triumph o'er the reign
Which they so soon resign:
Of this world weigh the gain,
Insurance safe is thine.

Dost think that beauty's power
Life sweetest pleasure gives?
Go, pluck the summer flower,
And see how long it lives:
Behold, the rays glide on
Along the summer plain
Ere thou canst say they're gone:—
Know such is beauty's reign.

Who thinks that love doth live
In beauty's tempting show,

Shall find his hopes ungive,
And melt in reason's thaw.
Who thinks that pleasure lies
In every fairy bower,
Shall oft, to his surprise,
Find poison in the flower.

Dost doubt my warning song?
Then doubt the sun gives light,
Doubt truth to teach thee wrong,
Think wrong alone is right;
And live as lives the knave,
Intrigue's deceiving guest;
Be tyrant, or be slave,
As suits thy ends the best.

Would'st heed the truths I sing,
To profit wherewithal,
Clip folly's wanton wing,
And keep her within call.
I've little else to give,
But thou canst easy try;
The lesson how to live
Is but to learn to die.

HOOD

I remember, I remember

I REMEMBER, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn ;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away !

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light !
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday,—
The tree is living yet.

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing ;
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,

And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow !

I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high ;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky ;
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heaven
Than when I was a boy.

JOANNA BAILLIE

The Outlaw's Song (from *Orra*)

THE chough and crow to roost are gone,
The owl sits on the tree,
The hush'd wind wails with feeble moan,
Like infant charity.
The wild-fire dances on the fen,
The red star sheds its ray,
Uprouse ye, then, my merry men !
It is our op'ning day.

Both child and nurse are fast asleep,
And closed is every flower,
And winking tapers faintly peep
High from my lady's bower ;

Bewilder'd hinds with shorten'd ken
  Shrink on their murky way,
Uprouse ye, then, my merry men!
  It is our op'ning day.

Nor board nor garner own we now,
  Nor roof nor latched door,
Nor kind mate, bound by holy vow
  To bless a good man's store;
Noon lulls us in a gloomy den,
  And night is grown our day,
Uprouse ye, then, my merry men!
  And use it as ye may.

EDWARD, LORD LYTTON

The Desire of Fame

I DO confess that I have wish'd to give
  My land the gift of no ignoble name,
And in that holier air have sought to live,
  Sunn'd with the hope of Fame.

Do I lament that roseate youth has flown
  In the hard labour grudged its niggard meed,
And cull from far and juster lands alone
  Few flowers from many a seed?

No! for whoever with an earnest soul
  Strives for some end from this low world afar,
Still upward travels, though he miss the goal,
  And strays—but towards a star.

Better than fame is still the wish for fame,
  The constant training for a glorious strife:
The athlete nurtured for the Olympian Game
  Gains strength at least for life.

The wish for Fame is faith in holy things
  That soothe the life, and shall outlive the tomb—
A reverent listening for some angel wings
  That cower above the gloom.

To gladden earth with beauty, or men's lives
  To serve with action, or their souls with truth,—
These are the ends for which the hope survives
  The ignobler thirsts of youth.

No, I lament not, though these leaves may fall
  From the seared branches on the desert plain,
Mock'd by the idle winds that waft; and all
  Life's blooms, its last, in vain!

If vain for others, not in vain for me,—
  Who builds an altar let him worship there;
What needs the crowd? though low the shrine may be,
  Not hallow'd less the prayer.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT

The Wonders of the Lane

STRONG climber of the mountain's side,
Though thou the vale disdain,
Yet walk with me where hawthorns hide
The wonders of the lane.
High o'er the rushy springs of Don
The stormy gloom is roll'd;
The moorland hath not yet put on
His purple, green, and gold.
But here the titling spreads his wing,
Where dewy daisies gleam;
And here the sun-flower of the spring
Burns bright in morning's beam.
To mountain winds the famished fox
Complains that Sol is slow
O'er headlong steeps and gushing rocks
His royal robe to throw.
But here the lizard seeks the sun,
Here coils in light the snake;
And here the fire-tuft hath begun
Its beauteous nest to make.
O then, while hums the earliest bee
Where verdure fires the plain,
Walk thou with me, and stoop to see
The glories of the lane!
For, oh, I love these banks of rock,

This roof of sky and tree,
These tufts, where sleeps the gloaming clock,
And wakes the earliest bee!
As spirits from eternal day
Look down on earth secure,
Gaze thou, and wonder, and survey,
A world in miniature!
A world not scorn'd by Him who made
Even weakness by His might;
But solemn in His depth of shade,
And splendid in His light.
Light! not alone on clouds afar
O'er storm-lov'd mountains spread,
Or widely teaching sun and star,
Thy glorious thoughts are read;
Oh no! thou art a wondrous book,
To sky, and sea, and land—
A page on which the angels look,
Which insects understand!
And here,'O Light! divinely fair,
Divinely plain and clear,
Like splinters of a chrystal hair,
Thy bright small hand is here.
Yon drop-fed lake, six inches wide,
Is Huron, girt with wood;
This driplet feeds Missouri's tide—
And that Niagara's flood.
What tidings from the Andes brings
Yon line of liquid light,

That down from heav'n in madness flings
The blind foam of its might?
Do I not hear his thunder roll—
The roar that ne'er is still?
'Tis mute as death!—but in my soul
It roars, and ever will.
What forests tall of tiniest moss
Clothe every little stone!
What pigmy oaks their foliage toss
O'er pigmy valleys lone!
With shade o'er shade, from ledge to ledge,
Ambitious of the sky,
They feather o'er the steepest edge
Of mountains mushroom high.
O God of marvels! who can tell
What myriad living things
On these grey stones unseen may dwell;
What nations, with their kings?
I feel no shock, I hear no groan
While fate perchance o'erwhelms
Empires on this subverted stone—
A hundred ruin'd realms!
Lo! in that dot, some mite, like me,
Impell'd by woe or whim,
May crawl, some atom cliffs to see—
A tiny world to him!
Lo! while he pauses, and admires
The works of Nature's might,
Spurn'd by my foot, his world expires,

And all to him is night!
O God of terrors! what are we?—
Poor insects, spark'd with thought!
Thy whisper, Lord, a word from Thee
Could smite us into nought!
But should'st Thou wreck our father-land,
And mix it with the deep,
Safe in the hollow of Thine hand
Thy little ones would sleep.

LAMAN BLANCHARD

Hidden Joys

PLEASURES lie thickest where no pleasures seem,
There's not a leaf that falls upon the ground
But holds some joy, of silence, or of sound;
Some sprite begotten of a summer dream.
The very meanest things are made supreme
With innate ecstasy. No grain of sand
But moves a bright and million-peopled land,
And hath its Edens and its Eves, I deem.
For love, though blind himself, a curious eye
Hath lent me, to behold the hearts of things,
And touched mine ear with power. Thus far or nigh,
Minute or mighty, fixed or free with wings,
Delight from many a nameless covert sly
Peeps sparkling, and in tones familiar sings.

KEBLE

First Sunday after Epiphany

LESSONS sweet of spring returning,
Welcome to the thoughtful heart!
May I call ye sense or learning,
Instinct pure, or heav'n-taught art?
Be your title what it may,
Sweet the lengthening April day,
While with you the soul is free,
Ranging wild o'er hill and lea.

Soft as Memnon's harp at morning,
To the inward ear devout,
Touch'd by light, with heavenly warning
Your transporting chords ring out.
Every leaf in every nook,
Every wave in every brook,
Chanting with a solemn voice,
Minds us of our better choice.

Needs no show of mountain hoary,
Winding shore or deepening glen,
Where the landscape in its glory
Teaches truth to wandering men:
Give true hearts but earth and sky,
And some flowers to bloom and die,—

Homely scenes and simple views
Lowly thoughts may best infuse.

See the soft green willow springing
  Where the waters gently pass,
Every way her free arms flinging
  O'er the moist and reedy grass.
Long ere winter blasts are fled,
See her tipp'd with vernal red,
And her kindly flower display'd
Ere her leaf can cast a shade.

Though the rudest hand assail her,
  Patiently she droops awhile,
But when showers and breezes hail her,
  Wears again her willing smile.
Thus I learn Contentment's power
From the slighted willow bower,
Ready to give thanks and live
On the least that Heaven can give.

If, the quiet brooklet leaving,
  Up the stony path I wind,
Haply half in fancy grieving
  For the shades I leave behind,
By the dusty wayside drear,
Nightingales with joyous cheer
Sing, my sadness to reprove,
Gladlier than in cultur'd grove.

Where the thickest boughs are twining
  Of the greenest darkest tree,
There they plunge, the light declining—
  All may hear, but none may see.
Fearless of the passing hoof,
Hardly will they fleet aloof;
So they live in modest ways,
Trust entire, and ceaseless praise.

THE trivial round, the common task,
  Would furnish all we ought to ask.

JOHN STERLING

The Husbandman

EARTH of man the bounteous mother,
  Feeds him still with corn and wine;
He who best would aid a brother,
Shares with him these gifts divine.

Many a power within her bosom
Noiseless, hidden, works beneath:
Hence are seed, and leaf, and blossom,
Golden ear and clustered wreath.

These to swell with strength and beauty,
Is the royal task of man;
Man's a king, his throne is Duty,
Since his work on earth began.

Bud and harvest, bloom and vintage,
These, like man, are fruits of earth;
Stamped in clay, a heavenly mintage,
All from dust receive their birth.

Barn and mill, and wine-vat's treasures,
Earthly goods for earthly lives,
These are Nature's ancient pleasures,
These her child from her derives.

What the dream, but vain rebelling,
If from earth we sought to flee?
'Tis our stored and ample dwelling,
'Tis from it the skies we see.

Wind and frost, and hour and season,
Land and water, sun and shade,
Work with these, as bids thy reason,
For they work thy toil to aid.

Sow thy seed and reap in gladness!
Man himself is all a seed;
Hope and hardship, joy and sadness,
Slow the plant to ripeness lead.

SARA COLERIDGE

I was a Brook

I WAS a brook in straitest channel pent,
Forcing 'mid rocks and stones my toilsome way,
A scanty brook in wandering well-nigh spent;
But now with thee, rich stream, conjoin'd I stray,
Through golden meads the river sweeps along,
Murmuring its deep full joy in gentlest undersong.

I crept through desert moor and gloomy glade,
My waters ever vex'd, yet sad and slow,
My waters ever steep'd in baleful shade:
But, whilst with thee, rich stream, conjoined I flow,
E'en in swift course the river seems to rest,
Blue sky, bright bloom and verdure imag'd on its breast.

And, whilst with thee I roam through regions bright,
Beneath kind love's serene and gladsome sky
A thousand happy things that seek the light,
Till now in darkest shadow forc'd to lie,
Up through the illumin'd waters nimbly run,
To show their forms and hues in the all revealing sun.

How High yon Lark

HOW high yon lark is heavenward borne!
Yet, ere again she hails the morn,
Beyond where birds can wing their way
Our souls may soar to endless day,
May hear the heavenly choirs rejoice,
While earth still echoes to her voice.

A waveless flood, supremely bright,
Has drown'd the myriad isles of light;
But ere that ocean ebb'd away,
The shadowy gulf their forms betray,
Above the stars our course may run,
'Mid beams unborrow'd from the sun.

In this bright light what flowers will bloom,
What insects quit the self-made womb!
But ere the bud its leaves unfold,
The gorgeous fly his plumes of gold,
On fairer wings we too may glide,
Where youth and joy no ills betide.

Then, come, while yet we linger here,
Fit thoughts for that celestial sphere,
A heart which under keenest light,
May bear the gaze of spirits bright,
Who all things know, and nought endure
That is not holy, just and pure.

BERNARD BARTON

To a Grandmother

('Old age is dark and unlovely.'—OSSIAN.)

O SAY not so! A bright old age is thine;
Calm as the gentle light of summer eves,
Ere twilight dim her dusky mantle weaves;
Because to thee is given, in thy decline,
A heart that does not thanklessly repine
At aught of which the hand of God bereaves,
Yet all he sends with gratitude receives;—
May such a quiet, thankful close be mine!
And hence thy fireside chair appears to me
A peaceful throne—which thou wert form'd to fill;
Thy children, ministers to do thy will;
And those grandchildren, sporting round thy knee,
Thy little subjects, looking up to thee,
As one who claims their fond allegiance still.

II

VOICES FROM THE WESTERN WORLD

Cities of mortals woe-begone
Fantastic care derides,
But in the serious landscape lone
Stern benefit abides.

EMERSON.

Drive a nail home and clinch it so faithfully that you can wake up in the night and think of your work with satisfaction—a work at which you would not be ashamed to invoke the Muse. So will help you God, and so only. Every nail driven should be as another rivet in the machine of the universe, you carrying on the work.

THOREAU.

Thanatopsis

TO him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall
claim

Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's grey and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes

That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favourite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the grey-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,

Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

The Old Man's Counsel

AMONG our hills and valleys, I have known
Wise and grave men, who, while their diligent hands
Tended or gathered in the fruits of earth,
Were reverent learners in the solemn school
Of Nature. Not in vain to them were sent
Seed-time and harvest, or the vernal shower
That darkened the brown tilth, or snow that beat
On the white winter hills. Each brought, in turn,
Some truth, some lesson on the life of man,
Or recognition of the Eternal Mind
Who veils His glory with the elements.

One such I knew long since, a white-haired man,
Pithy of speech, and merry when he would;
A genial optimist, who daily drew
From what he saw his quaint moralities.
Kindly he held communion, though so old,
With me a dreaming boy, and taught me much
That books tell not, and I shall ne'er forget.

The sun of May was bright in middle heaven,
And steeped the sprouting forests, the green hills,
And emerald wheat-field, in his yellow light.
Upon the apple-tree, where rosy buds
Stood clustered, ready to burst forth in bloom,
The robin warbled forth his full clear note
For hours, and wearied not. Within the woods,
Whose young and half-transparent leaves scarce cast
A shade, gay circles of anemones
Danced on their stalks; the shad-bush, white with flowers,
Brightened the glens; the new-leaved butternut
And quivering poplar to the roving breeze
Gave a balsamic fragrance. In the fields
I saw the pulses of the gentle wind
On the young grass. My heart was touched with joy
At so much beauty, flushing every hour
Into a fuller beauty; but my friend,
The thoughtful ancient, standing at my side,
Gazed on it mildly sad. I asked him why.

'Well mayst thou join in gladness', he replied,
'With the glad earth, her springing plants and flowers,
And this soft wind, the herald of the green
Luxuriant summer. Thou art young like them,
And well mayst thou rejoice. But while the flight

Of seasons fills and knits thy spreading frame,
It withers mine, and thins my hair, and dims
These eyes, whose fading light shall soon be quenched
In utter darkness. Hearest thou that bird?'

I listened, and from midst the depth of woods
Heard the love-signal of the grouse, that wears
A sable ruff around his mottled neck;
Partridge they call him by our northern streams,
And pheasant by the Delaware. He beat
His barred sides with his speckled wings, and made
A sound like distant thunder; slow the strokes
At first, then fast and faster, till at length
They passed into a murmur and were still.

'There hast thou', said my friend, 'a fitting type
Of human life. 'Tis an old truth, I know,
But images like these revive the power
Of long familiar truths. Slow pass our days
In childhood, and the hours of light are long
Betwixt the morn and eve; with swifter lapse
They glide in manhood, and in age they fly;
Till days and seasons flit before the mind
As flit the snow-flakes in a winter storm,
Seen rather than distinguished. Ah! I seem
As if I sat within a helpless bark,

By swiftly-running waters hurried on
To shoot some mighty cliff. Along the banks
Grove after grove, rock after frowning rock,
Bare sands and pleasant homes, and flowery nooks,
And isles and whirlpools in the stream, appear
Each after each, but the devoted skiff
Darts by so swiftly that their images
Dwell not upon the mind, or only dwell
In dim confusion; faster yet I sweep
By other banks, and the great gulf is near.

'Wisely, my son, while yet thy days are long,
And this fair change of seasons passes slow,
Gather and treasure up the good they yield—
All that they teach of virtue, of pure thoughts
And kind affections, reverence for thy God
And for thy brethren; so when thou shalt come
Into these barren years, thou mayst not bring
A mind unfurnished and a withered heart.'

Long since that white-haired ancient slept—but still,
When the red flower-buds crowd the orchard-bough,
And the ruffed grouse is drumming far within
The woods, his venerable form again
Is at my side, his voice is in my ear.

A Winter Piece

THE time has been that these wild solitudes,
Yet beautiful as wild, were trod by me
Oftener than now; and when the ills of life
Had chafed my spirit—when the unsteady pulse
Beat with strange flutterings—I would wander forth
And seek the woods. The sunshine on my path
Was to me as a friend. The swelling hills,
The quiet dells retiring far between,
With gentle invitation to explore
Their windings, were a calm society
That talked with me and soothed me. Then the chant
Of birds, and chime of brooks, and soft caress
Of the fresh sylvan air, made me forget
The thoughts that broke my peace, and I began
To gather simples by the fountain's brink,
And lose myself in day-dreams. While I stood
In Nature's loneliness, I was with one
With whom I early grew familiar, one
Who never had a frown for me, whose voice
Never rebuked me for the hours I stole
From cares I loved not, but of which the world
Deems highest, to converse with her. When shrieked
The bleak November winds, and smote the woods,
And the brown fields were herbless, and the shades,

That met above the merry rivulet,
Were spoiled, I sought, I loved them still; they seemed
Like old companions in adversity.
Still there was beauty in my walks; the brook,
Bordered with sparkling frost-work, was as gay
As with its fringe of summer flowers. Afar,
The village with its spires, the path of streams
And dim receding valleys, hid before
By interposing trees, lay visible
Through the bare grove, and my familiar haunts
Seemed new to me. Nor was I slow to come
Among them, when the clouds, from their still skirts,
Had shaken down on earth the feathery snow,
And all was white. The pure keen air abroad,
Albeit it breathed no scent of herb, nor heard
Love-call of bird nor merry hum of bee,
Was not the air of death. Bright mosses crept
Over the spotted trunks, and the close buds,
That lay along the boughs, instinct with life,
Patient, and waiting the soft breath of Spring,
Feared not the piercing spirit of the North.
The snow-bird twittered on the beechen bough,
And 'neath the hemlock, whose thick branches bent
Beneath its cold bright burden, and kept dry
A circle, on the earth, of withered leaves,
The partridge found a shelter. Through the snow
The rabbit sprang away. The lighter track

Of fox, and the raccoon's broad path, were there,
Crossing each other. From his hollow tree
The squirrel was abroad, gathering the nuts
Just fallen, that asked the winter cold and sway
Of winter blast to shake them from their hold.

But Winter has yet brighter scenes—he boasts
Splendours beyond what gorgeous Summer knows;
Or Autumn with his many fruits, and woods
All flushed with many hues. Come when the rains
Have glazed the snow and clothed the trees with ice,
While the slant sun of February pours
Into the bowers a flood of light. Approach!
The incrusted surface shall upbear thy steps,
And the broad arching portals of the grove
Welcome thy entering. Look! the massy trunks
Are cased in the pure crystal; each light spray,
Nodding and tinkling in the breath of heaven,
Is studded with its trembling water-drops,
That glimmer with an amethystine light.
But round the parent-stem the low long boughs
Bend, in a glittering ring, and arbours hide
The glassy floor. Oh! you might deem the spot
The spacious cavern of some virgin mine,
Deep in the womb of earth—where the gems grow,
And diamonds put forth radiant rods and bud
With amethyst and topaz—and the place
Lit up, most royally, with the pure beam
That dwells in them. Or haply the vast hall

Of fairy palace, that outlasts the night,
And fades not in the glory of the sun ;—
Where crystal columns send forth slender shafts
And crossing arches ; and fantastic aisles
Wind from the sight in brightness, and are lost
Among the crowded pillars. Raise thine eye ;
Thou seest no cavern roof, no palace vault ;
There the blue sky and the white drifting cloud
Look in. Again the wildered fancy dreams
Of spouting fountains, frozen as they rose,
And fixed, with all their branching jets, in air,
And all their sluices sealed. All, all is light ;
Light without shade. But all shall pass away
With the next sun. From numberless vast trunks
Loosened, the crashing ice shall make a sound
Like the far roar of rivers, and the eve
Shall close o'er the brown woods as it was wont.

And it is pleasant, when the noisy streams
Are just set free, and milder suns melt off
The plashy snow, save only the firm drift
In the deep glen or the close shade of pines—
'Tis pleasant to behold the wreaths of smoke
Roll up among the maples of the hill,
Where the shrill sound of youthful voices wakes
The shriller echo, as the clear pure lymph,
That from the wounded trees, in twinkling drops,
Falls, mid the golden brightness of the morn,
Is gathered in with brimming pails, and oft,

Wielded by sturdy hands, the stroke of axe
Makes the woods ring. Along the quiet air
Come and float calmly off the soft light clouds,
Such as you see in summer, and the winds
Scarce stir the branches. Lodged in sunny cleft,
Where the cold breezes come not, blooms alone
The little wind-flower, whose just opened eye
Is blue as the spring heaven it gazes at—
Startling the loiterer in the naked groves
With unexpected beauty, for the time
Of blossoms and green leaves is yet afar.
And ere it comes, the encountering winds shall oft
Muster their wrath again, and rapid clouds
Shade heaven, and bounding on the frozen earth
Shall fall their volleyed stores, rounded like hail
And white like snow, and the loud North again
Shall buffet the vexed forest in his rage.

EMERSON

Good-Bye

GOOD-BYE, proud world! I'm going home:
Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine.
Long through thy weary crowds I roam;
A river-ark on the ocean brine.
Long I've been tossed like the driven foam;
But now, proud world! I'm going home.

Good-bye to Flattery's fawning face ;
To Grandeur with his wise grimace ;
To upstart Wealth's averted eye ;
To supple Office, low and high ;
To crowded halls, to court and street ;
To frozen hearts and hasting feet ;
To those who go and those who come ;
Good-bye, proud world ! I'm going home.

I am going to my own hearth-stone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—
A secret nook in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned ;
Where arches green, the livelong day,
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar feet have never trod
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome ;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools and the learned clan ;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet ?

The River

AND I behold once more
My old familiar haunts; here the blue river,
The same blue wonder that my infant eye
Admired, sage doubting whence the traveller came,—
Whence brought his sunny bubbles ere he washed
The fragrant flag-roots in my father's fields,
And where thereafter in the world he went.
Look, here he is, unaltered, save that now
He hath broke his banks and flooded all the vales
With his redundant waves.
Here is the rock where, yet a simple child,
I caught with bended pin my earliest fish,
Much triumphing,—and these the fields
Over whose flowers I chased the butterfly,
A blooming hunter of a fairy fine.
And hark! where overhead the ancient crows
Hold their sour conversation in the sky:—
These are the same, but I am not the same,
But wiser than I was, and wise enough
Not to regret the changes, tho' they cost
Me many a sigh. Oh, call not nature dumb;
These trees and stones are audible to me,
These idle flowers, that tremble in the wind,
I understand their faery syllables,
And all their sad significance. The wind,
That rustles down the well-known forest road—

It hath a sound more eloquent than speech.
The stream, the trees, the grass, the sighing wind,
All of them utter sounds of 'monishment
And grave parental love.
They are not of our race, they seem to say,
And yet have knowledge of our mortal race,
And somewhat of majestic sympathy,
Something of pity for the puny clay,
That holds and boasts the immeasurable mind.
I feel as I were welcome to these trees
After long months of weary wandering,
Acknowledged by their hospitable boughs ;
They know me as their son, for side by side,
They were coeval with my ancestors,
Adorned with them my country's primitive times
And soon may give my dust their funeral shade.

See thou bring not to field or stone
  The fancies found in books ;
Leave authors' eyes, and fetch your own,
  To brave the landscape's looks.

Nature's Philosopher

I

AND such I knew, a forest seer,
  A minstrel of the natural year,
Foreteller of the vernal ides,

Wise harbinger of spheres and tides,
A lover true, who knew by heart
Each joy the mountain dales impart;
It seemed that Nature could not raise
A plant in any secret place,
In quaking bog, on snowy hill,
Beneath the grass that shades the rill,
Under the snow, between the rocks,
In damp fields known to bird and fox,
But he would come in the very hour
It opened in its virgin bower,
As if a sunbeam showed the place,
And tell its long-descended race.
It seemed as if the breezes brought him,
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him;
As if by secret sight he knew
Where, in far fields, the orchis grew.
Many haps fall in the field
Seldom seen by wishful eyes,
But all her shows did Nature yield,
To please and win this pilgrim wise.
He saw the partridge drum in the woods;
He heard the woodcock's evening hymn;
He found the tawny thrushes' broods;
And the shy hawk did wait for him;
What others did at distance hear,
And guessed within the thicket's gloom,
Was shown to this philosopher,
And at his bidding seemed to come.

II

In unploughed Maine he sought the lumberers' gang
Where from a hundred lakes young rivers sprang ;
He trode the unplanted forest floor, whereon
The all-seeing sun for ages hath not shone ;
Where feeds the moose, and walks the surly bear,
And up the tall mast runs the woodpecker.
He saw beneath dim aisles in odorous beds,
The slight Linnæa hang its twin-born heads,
And blessed the monument of the man of flowers,
Which breathes his sweet fame through the northern bowers.
He heard, when in the grove, at intervals,
With sudden roar the aged pine-tree falls,—
One crash, the death-hymn of the perfect tree,
Declares the close of its green century.
Low lies the plant to whose creation went
Sweet influence from every element ;
Whose living towers the years conspired to build,
Whose giddy top the morning loved to gild.
Through these green tents, by eldest Nature dressed,
He roamed, content alike with man and beast.
Where darkness found him he lay glad at night ;
There the red morning touched him with its light.
Three moons his great heart him a hermit made,
So long he roved at will the boundless shade.
The timid it concerns to ask their way,
And fear what foe in caves and swamps can stray,

To make no step until the event is known,
And ills to come as evils past bemoan.
Not so the wise; no coward watch he keeps
To spy what danger on his pathway creeps;
Go where he will, the wise man is at home,
His hearth the earth, his hall the azure dome;
Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed.

Few can see Nature

TO speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. His intercourse with heaven and earth becomes part of his daily food. In the presence of nature a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows. Nature says, He is my creature, and maugre all his impertinent griefs, he shall be glad with me. Not the sun or the summer alone, but every hour and season yields its tribute of delight; for every hour and change corresponds to and authorises a different state of the mind, from breathless noon to grimmest midnight. Nature is a setting that fits equally well a comic or a mourn-

ing piece. In good health the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a lake common in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods, too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period soever of life is always a child. In the woods is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God a decorum and sanctity reigns, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life—no disgrace, no calamity (leaving me my eyes), which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground—my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space—all mean egotism vanishes, I become a transparent eyeball; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds there foreign and accidental; to be brothers, to be acquaintances, master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.

LOWELL

The Heritage

THE rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick and stone and gold,
And he inherits soft white hands,
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dares to wear a garment old;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares;
The bank may break, the factory burn,
A breath may burst his bubble shares,
And soft white hands could hardly earn
A living that would serve his turn;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits wants,
His stomach craves for dainty fare;
With sated heart he hears the pants
Of toiling hands with brown arms bare,
And wearies in his easy chair;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,

A hardy frame, a hardier spirit;
King of two hands, he does his part
In every useful toil and art;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things,
A rank adjudged by toil-won merit,
Content that from employment springs,
A heart that in his labour sings;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth a poor man's son inherit?
A patience learned of being poor,
Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it,
A fellow-feeling that is sure
To make the outcast bless his door;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

O, rich man's son! there is a toil,
That with all others level stands;
Large charity doth never soil,
But only whiten, soft white hands,—
This is the best crop from thy lands;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

O, poor man's son! scorn not thy state;
  There is worse weariness than thine,
In merely being rich and great;
  Toil only gives the soul to shine,
  And makes rest fragrant and benign;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being poor to hold in fee.

Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
  Are equal in the earth at last;
Both, children of the same dear God,
  Prove title to your heirship vast
  By record of a well-filled past;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Well worth a life to hold in fee.

Al Fresco

THE dandelions and buttercups
  Gild all the lawn; the drowsy bee
Stumbles among the clover-tops,
And summer sweetens all but me:
Away, unfruitful lore of books,
For whose vain idiom we reject
The soul's more native dialect,
Aliens among the birds and brooks,
Dull to interpret or conceive
What gospels lost the woods retrieve!

Away, ye critics, city-bred,
Who springes set of thus and so,
And in the first man's footsteps tread,
Like those who toil through drifted snow!
Away, my poets, whose sweet spell
Can make a garden of a cell!
I need ye not, for I to-day
Will make one long sweet verse of play.

Snap, chord of manhood's tenser strain!
To-day I will be a boy again;
The mind's pursuing element,
Like a bow slackened and unbent,
In some dark corner shall be leant.
The robin sings, as of old, from the limb!
The cat-bird croons in the lilac-bush!
Through the dim arbour, himself more dim,
Silently hops the hermit-thrush,
The withered leaves keep dumb for him;
The irreverent buccaneering bee
Hath stormed and rifled the nunnery
Of the lily, and scattered the sacred floor
With haste-dropt gold from shrine to door;
There, as of yore,
The rich, milk-tingeing buttercup
Its tiny polished urn holds up,
Filled with ripe summer to the edge,
The sun in his own wine to pledge;
And our tall elm, this hundredth year

Doge of our leafy Venice here,
Who, with an annual ring, doth wed
The blue Adriatic overhead,
Shadows with his palatial mass
The deep canals of flowering grass.

O unestrangëd birds and bees!
O face of Nature always true!
O never-unsympathising trees!
O never-rejecting roof of blue,
Whose rash disherison never falls
On us unthinking prodigals,
Yet who convictest all of ill,
So grand and unappeasable!
Methinks my heart from each of these
Plucks part of childhood back again,
Long there imprisoned, as the breeze
Doth every hidden odour seize
Of wood and water, hill and plain;
Once more am I admitted peer
In the upper house of Nature here,
And feel through all my pulses run
The royal blood of wind and sun.

Upon these elm-arched solitudes
No hum of neighbour toil intrudes;
The only hammer that I hear
Is wielded by the woodpecker,
The single noisy calling his

In all our leaf-hid Sybaris ;
The good old time, close-hidden here,
Persists a loyal cavalier,
While Roundheads prim, with point of fox,
Probe wainscot-chink and empty box ;
Here no hoarse-voiced iconoclast
Insults thy statues, royal Past ;
Myself too prone the axe to wield,
I touch the silver side of the shield
With lance reversed, and challenge peace,
A willing convert of the trees.

How chanced it that so long I tost
A cable's length from this rich coast,
With foolish anchors hugging close
The beckoning weeds and lazy ooze,
Nor had the wit to wreck before
On this enchanted island's shore,
Whither the current of the sea,
With wiser drift, persuaded me?

Oh, might we but of such rare days
Build up the spirit's dwelling-place !
A temple of so Parian stone
Would brook a marble God alone,
The statue of a perfect life,
Far-shrined from earth's bestaining strife.
Alas ! though such felicity
In our vext world here may not be,

Yet, as sometimes the peasant's hut
Shows stones which old religion cut
With text inspired, or mystic sign
Of the Eternal and Divine,
Torn from the consecration deep
Of some fallen nunnery's mossy sleep,
So, from the ruins of this day
Crumbling in golden dust away,
The soul one gracious block may draw,
Carved from some fragment of the law,
Which, set in life's prosaic wall,
Old benedictions may recall,
And lure some nunlike thoughts to take
Their dwelling here for memory's sake.

The Beggar

A BEGGAR through the world am I,—
From place to place I wander by.
Fill up my pilgrim's scrip for me,
For Christ's sweet sake and charity!

A little of thy steadfastness,
Rounded with leafy gracefulness.
Old oak, give me,—
That the world's blasts may round me blow,—
And I yield gently to and fro,
While my stout-hearted trunk below
And firm-set roots unshaken be.

Some of thy stern, unyielding might,
Enduring still through day and night
Rude tempest-shock and withering blight,—
That I may keep at bay
The changeful April sky of chance
And the strong tide of circumstance,—
Give me, old granite gray,

Some of thy pensiveness serene,
Some of thy never-dying green,
Put in this scrip of mine,—
That griefs may fall like snow-flakes light,
And deck me in a robe of white,
Ready to be an angel bright,—
O sweetly-mournful pine.

A little of thy merriment,
Of thy sparkling, light content,
Give me, my cheerful brook,—
That I may still be full of glee
And gladsomeness, where'er I be,
Though fickle fate hath prisoned me
In some neglected nook.

Ye have been very kind and good
To me, since I've been in the wood ;
Ye have gone nigh to fill my heart ;
But good-bye, kind friends, every one,

I've far to go ere set of sun ;
Of all good things I would have part,
The day was high ere I could start,
And so my journey's scarce begun.

Heaven help me ! how could I forget
To beg of thee, dear violet !
Some of thy modesty,
That blossoms here as well, unseen,
As if before the world thou'dst been,
O, give, to strengthen me.

THOREAU

The Simple Life

I LEARNED this, at least by experiment : that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavours to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary ; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him ; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favour in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the licence of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will

not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

Life in the Woods

I WENT to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief end of a man here to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever. The

very simplicity and nakedness of man's life in the primitive ages imply this advantage at least, that they left him still but a sojourner in nature.

Freedom

AS I preferred some things to others, and especially valued my freedom, as I could fare hard and yet succeed well, I did not wish to spend my time in earning rich carpets or other fine furniture, or delicate cookery, or a house in the Grecian or the Gothic style just yet. If there are any to whom it is no interruption to acquire these things, and who know how to use them when acquired, I relinquish to them the pursuit. Some are industrious, and appear to love labour for its own sake, or perhaps because it keeps them out of worse mischief; to such I have at present nothing to say. Those who would not know what to do with more leisure than they now enjoy, I might advise to work twice as hard as they do,—work till they pay for themselves, and get their free papers. For myself, I found that the occupation of a day-labourer was the most independent of any, especially as it required only thirty or forty days in a year to support one. The labourer's day ends with the going down of the sun, and he is then free to devote himself to his chosen pursuit, independent of his labour;

but his employer, who speculates from month to month, has no respite from one end of the year to the other.

In short, I am convinced, both by faith and experience, that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if he will live simply and wisely; as the pursuits of the simpler nations are still the sports of the more artificial. It is not necessary that a man should earn his living by the sweat of his brow, unless he sweats easier than I do.

Clothes

WE don garment after garment, as if we grew like exogenous plants by addition without. Our outside and often thin and fanciful clothes are our epidermis or false skin, which partakes not of our life, and may be stripped off here and there without fatal injury; our thicker garments, constantly worn, are our cellular integument, or cortex; but our shirts are our liber or true bark, which cannot be removed without girdling and so destroying the man. I believe that all races at some seasons wear something equivalent to the shirt. It is desirable that a man be clad so simply that he can lay his hands on himself in the dark, and that he live in all respects so compactly and preparedly,

that, if an enemy take the town, he can, like the old philosopher, walk out the gate empty-handed without anxiety. While one thick garment is, for most purposes, as good as three thin ones, and cheap clothing can be obtained at prices really to suit customers; while a thick coat can be bought for five dollars, which will last as many years, thick pantaloons for two dollars, cowhide boots for a dollar and a-half a pair, a summer hat for a quarter of a dollar, and a winter cap for sixty-two and a-half cents, or a better be made at home at a nominal cost, where is he so poor that, clad in such a suit, of his own earning, there will not be found wise men to do him reverence?

New England Homes

THE small houses which were scattered along the river at intervals of a mile or more were commonly out of sight to us, but sometimes, when we rowed near the shore, we heard the peevish note of a hen, or some slight domestic sound, which betrayed them. The lockmen's houses were particularly well placed, retired, and high, always at falls or rapids, and commanding the pleasantest reaches of the river—for it is generally wider and more lake-like just above a fall—and there they wait for boats. These humble dwellings, homely

and sincere, in which a hearth was still the essential part, were more pleasing to our eyes than palaces or castles would have been. In the noon of these days, as we have said, we occasionally climbed the banks and approached these houses, to get a glass of water and make acquaintance with their inhabitants. High in the leafy bank, surrounded commonly by a small patch of corn and beans, squashes and lemons, with sometimes a graceful hop-yard on one side, and some running vine over the windows, they appeared like bee-hives set to gather honey for a summer. I have not read of any Arcadian life which surpasses the actual luxury and serenity of these New England dwellings. For the outward gilding, at least, the age is golden enough. As you approach the sunny doorway, awakening the echoes by your steps, still no sound from these barracks of repose, and you fear that the gentlest knock may seem rude to the Oriental dreamers. The door is opened, perchance, by some Yankee-Hindoo woman, whose small-voiced but sincere hospitality, out of the bottomless depths of a quiet nature, has travelled quite round to the opposite side, and fears only to obtrude its kindness. You step over the white-scoured floor to the bright 'dresser' lightly, as if afraid to disturb the devotions of the household—for Oriental dynasties appear to have passed away since the dinner-table was last spread here—and

thence to the frequented curb, where you see your long-forgotten, unshaven face at the bottom, in juxtaposition with new-made butter and the trout in the well. 'Perhaps you would like some molasses and ginger', suggests the faint noon voice. Sometimes there sits the brother who follows the sea, their representative man, who knows only how far it is to the nearest port, no more distances, all the rest is sea and distant capes,—patting the dog, or dandling the kitten in arms that were stretched by the cable and the oar, pulling against Boreas or the trade-winds. He looks up at the stranger, half pleased, half astonished, with a mariner's eye, as if he were a dolphin within cast. If men will believe it, *sua si bona nôrint*, there are no more quiet Tempes, nor more poetic and Arcadian lives, than may be lived in these New England dwellings. We thought that the employment of their inhabitants by day would be to tend the flowers and herds, and at night, like the shepherds of old, to cluster and give names to the stars from the river banks.

A Palace of the Golden Age

I SOMETIMES dream of a larger and more populous house, standing in a golden age, of enduring materials, and without ginger-bread

work, which shall still consist of only one room, a vast, rude, substantial, primitive hall, without ceiling or plastering, with bare rafters and purlins supporting a sort of lower heaven over one's head, —useful to keep off rain and snow; where the king and queen posts stand out to receive your homage, when you have done reverence to the prostrate Saturn of an older dynasty on stepping over the sill; a cavernous house, wherein you must reach up a torch upon a pole to see the roof; where some may live in the fireplace, some in the recess of a window, and some on settles, some at one end of the hall, some at another, and some aloft on rafters with the spiders, if they choose; a house which you have got into when you have opened the outside door, and the ceremony is over; where the weary traveller may wash, and eat, and converse, and sleep, without further journey; such a shelter as you would be glad to reach in a tempestuous night, containing all the essentials of a house, and nothing for house-keeping; where you can see all the treasures of the house at one view, and every thing hangs upon its peg that a man should use; at once kitchen, pantry, parlour, chamber, store-house, and garret; where you can see so necessary a thing as a barrel or a ladder, so convenient a thing as a cupboard, and hear the pot boil, and pay your respects to the fire that cooks your dinner and the oven that

bakes your bread, and the necessary furniture and utensils are the chief ornaments; where the washing is not put out, nor the fire, nor the mistress, and perhaps you are sometimes requested to move from off the trap-door, when the cook would descend into the cellar, and so learn whether the ground is solid or hollow beneath you without stamping. A house whose inside is as open and manifest as a bird's nest, and you cannot go in at the front door and out at the back without seeing some of its inhabitants; where to be a guest is to be presented with the freedom of the house, and not to be carefully excluded from seven-eighths of it, shut up in a particular cell, and told to make yourself at home there,—in solitary confinement. Now-a-days the host does not admit you to his hearth, but has got the mason to build one for yourself somewhere in his alley, and hospitality is the art of keeping you at the greatest distance. There is as much secrecy about the cooking as if he had a design to poison you. I am aware that I have been on many a man's premises, and might have been legally ordered off, but I am not aware that I have been in many men's houses. I might visit in my old clothes a king and queen who lived simply in such a house as I have described, if I were going their way; but backing out of a modern palace will be all that I shall desire to learn, if ever I am caught in one. For the improvements

of ages have had but little influence on the essential laws of man's existence: as our skeletons, probably, are not to be distinguished from those of our ancestors.

Nature

O NATURE! I do not aspire
To be the highest in thy quire,—
To be a meteor in the sky,
Or comet that may range on high;
Only a zephyr that may blow
Among the reeds by the river low;
Give me thy most privy place
Where to run my airy race.

In some withdrawn, unpublic mead
Let me sigh upon a reed,
Or in the woods, with leafy din,
Whisper the still evening in:
Some still work give me to do,—
Only—be it near to you!
For I'd rather be thy child
And pupil, in the forest wild
Than be the king of men elsewhere,
And most sovereign slave of care.

Nature in the morning

EVERY morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond: that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of king Tching-thang to this effect: 'Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again.' I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigour and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are

not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly-acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and proves itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensual life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are invigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in morning atmosphere. The Vedas say: 'All intelligences awake with the morning.' Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labours of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

A Sunset

WE had a remarkable sunset one day last November. I was walking in a meadow, the source of a small brook, when the sun at last, just before setting, after a cold grey day, reached a clear stratum in the horizon, and the softest, brightest morning sunlight fell on the dry grass and on the stems of the trees in the opposite horizon, and on the leaves of the shrub-oaks on the hill-side, while our shadows stretched long over the meadow eastwards, as if we were the only motes in its beams. It was such a light as we could not have imagined a moment before, and the air also was so warm and serene that nothing was wanting to make a paradise of that meadow. When we reflected that this was not a solitary phenomenon, never to happen again, but that it would happen for ever and ever an infinite number of evenings, and cheer and reassure the latest child that walked there, it was more glorious still.

The sun sets on some retired meadow, where no house is visible, with all the glory and splendour that it lavishes on cities, and perchance, as it has never set before—where there is but a solitary marsh-hawk to have his wings gilded by it, or only a musquash looks out from his cabin, and there is some little black-veined brook in the midst of the

marsh, just beginning to meander, winding slowly round a decaying stump. We walked in so pure and bright a light, gilding the withered grass and leaves, so softly and serenely bright, I thought I had never bathed in such a golden flood, without a ripple or a murmur to it. The west side of every wood and rising ground gleamed like the boundary of Elysium, and the sun on our backs seemed like a gentle herdsman driving us home at evening.

So we saunter toward the Holy Land, till one day the sun shall shine more brightly than ever he has done, shall perchance shine into our minds and hearts, and light up our whole lives with a great awakening light, as warm and serene and golden as on a bank-side in autumn.

The Purity of Nature

THE wonderful purity of nature at this season is a most pleasing fact. Every decayed stump and moss-grown stone and rail, and the dead leaves of autumn, are concealed by a clear napkin of snow. In the bare fields and tinkling woods, see what virtue survives. In the coldest and bleakest places, the warmest charities still maintain a foothold. A cold and searching wind drives away all contagion, and nothing can withstand it but what has a virtue in it; and, accordingly, whatever we

meet with in cold and bleak places, as the tops of mountains, we respect for a sort of sturdy innocence, a Puritan toughness. All things beside seem to be called in for shelter, and what stays out must be part of the original frame of the universe, and of such valour as God himself. It is invigorating to breathe the cleansed air. Its greater fineness and purity are visible to the eye, and we would fain stay out long and late, that the gales may sigh through us too, as through the leafless trees, and fit us for the winter—as if we hoped so to borrow some pure and steadfast virtue, which will stead us in all seasons.

A healthy man, indeed, is the complement of the seasons, and in winter summer is in his heart.

Society in Nature

YET I experienced sometimes that the most sweet and tender, the most innocent and encouraging society may be found in any natural object, even for the poor misanthrope and most melancholy man. There can be no very black melancholy to him who lives in the midst of Nature, and has his senses still. There was never yet such a storm, but it was Æolian music to a healthy and innocent ear. Nothing can rightly compel a simple and brave man to a vulgar sad-

ness. While I enjoy the friendship of the seasons I trust that nothing can make life a burden to me. The gentle rain which waters my beans and keeps me in the house to-day is not drear and melancholy, but good for me too. Though it prevents me hoeing them, it is of far more worth than my hoeing. If it should continue so long as to cause the seeds to rot in the ground and destroy the potatoes in the lowlands, it would still be good for the grass on the uplands, and, being good for the grass, it would be good for me. Sometimes, when I compare myself with other men, it seems as if I were more favoured by the gods than they, beyond any deserts that I am conscious of—as if I had a warrant and surety at their hands which my fellows have not, and were especially guided and guarded. I do not flatter myself, but if it be possible they flatter me. I have never felt lonesome, or in the least oppressed by a sense of solitude but once, and that was a few weeks after I came to the woods, when, for an hour, I doubted if the near neighbourhood of man was not essential to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst of a gentle rain, while these thoughts prevailed, I was suddenly sensible of such sweet and beneficent society in Nature, in the very pattering

of the drops, and in every sight and sound around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighbourhood insignificant, and I have never thought of them since. Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy, and befriended me. I was so distinctly made aware of the presence of something kindred to me, even in scenes which we are accustomed to call wild and dreary, and also that the nearest of blood to me and humanest was not a person nor a villager, that I thought no place could ever be strange to me again.

Men frequently say to me, 'I should think you would feel lonesome down there, and want to be nearer to folks, rainy and snowy days and nights especially'. I am tempted to reply to such—This whole earth which we inhabit is but a point in space. How far apart, think you, dwell the two most distant inhabitants of yonder star, the breadth of whose disk cannot be appreciated by our instruments? Why should I feel lonely? Is not our planet in the Milky Way? This which you put seems to me not to be the most important question. What sort of space is that which separates a man from his fellows and makes him solitary? I have found that no exertion of the legs can bring two minds much nearer to one another. What do we want most to dwell near to? Not to many men

surely, the depot, the post office, the bar-room, the meeting-house, the school-house, the grocery, Beacon Hill, or the Five Points, where men most congregate, but to the perennial source of our life, whence in all our experience we have found that to issue, as the willow stands near the water and sends out its roots in that direction. This will vary with different natures, but this is the place where a wise man will dig his cellar.

The Old Fisherman of the Concord

I CAN just remember an old brown-coated man who was the Walton of this stream, who had come over from Newcastle, England, with his son—the latter a stout and hearty man who had lifted an anchor in his day. A straight old man he was who took his way in silence through the meadows, having passed the period of communication with his fellows; his old, experienced coat, hanging long and straight and brown as the yellow pine-bark, glittering with so much smothered sunlight, if you stood near enough, no work of art but naturalised at length. I often discovered him unexpectedly amid the pads and the grey willows when he moved, fishing in some old country method—for youth and age then went a-fishing together—full of incommunicable thoughts, per-

chance about his own Tyne and Northumberland. He was always to be seen in serene afternoons haunting the river, and almost rustling with the sedge; so many sunny hours in an old man's life, entrapping silly fish; almost grown to be the sun's familiar; what need had he of hat or raiment any, having served out his time, and seen through such thin disguises? I have seen how his coeval fates rewarded him with the yellow perch, and yet I thought his luck was not in proportion to his years; and I have seen when, with slow steps and weighed down with aged thoughts, he disappeared with his fish under his low-roofed house on the skirts of the village. I think nobody else saw him; nobody else remembers him now, for he soon after died, migrated to new Tyne streams. His fishing was not a sport, nor solely a means of subsistence, but a sort of solemn sacrament and withdrawal from the world, just as the aged read their Bibles.

The Wilderness

THE wilderness is near, as well as dear, to every man. Even the oldest villages are indebted to the border of wild wood which surrounds them more than to the gardens of men. There is something indescribably inspiring and beautiful in the

aspect of the forest skirting and occasionally jutting into the midst of new towns, which, like the sand-heaps of fresh fox-burrows, have sprung up in their midst. The very uprightness of the pines and maples asserts the ancient rectitude and vigour of nature. Our lives need the relief of such a background, where the pine flourishes and the jay still screams.

The Inner Voice

IF one listens to the faintest but constant suggestions of his genius, which are certainly true, he sees not to what extremes, or even insanity, it may lead him; and yet that way, as he grows more resolute and faithful, his road lies. The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels will at length prevail over the arguments and customs of mankind. No man ever followed his genius till it misled him. Though the result were bodily weakness, yet perhaps no one can say that the consequences were to be regretted, for these were a life of conformity to higher principles. If the day and the night are such that you greet them with joy, and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more immortal—that is your success. All nature is your congratulation, and you have cause

momentarily to bless yourself. The greatest gains and values are farthest from being appreciated. We easily come to doubt if they exist. We soon forget them. They are the highest reality. Perhaps the facts most astounding and most real are never communicated by man to man. The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched.

Rather than Love, than Money, than Fame, give me Truth

WE select granite for the underpinning of our houses and barns; we build fences of stone; but we do not ourselves rest on an underpinning of granitic truth, the lowest primitive rock. Our sills are rotten. What stuff is the man made of who is not coexistent in our thought with the purest and subtilest truth? I often accuse my finest acquaintances of an immense frivolity; for, while there are manners and compliments we do not meet, we do not teach one another the lessons of honesty and sincerity that the brutes do, or of steadiness and solidity that the rocks do. The fault is commonly mutual, however, for we do not habitually demand any more of each other.

Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let every one mind his own business, and endeavour to be what he was made

HOWEVER mean your life is, meet it and live it; do not shun it and call it hard names. It is not so bad as you are. It looks poorest when you are richest. The fault-finder will find faults even in paradise. Love your life, poor as it is. You may perhaps have some pleasant, thrilling, glorious hours, even in a poor house. The setting sun is reflected from the windows of the almshouse

as brightly as from the rich man's abode ; the snow melts before its door as early in the spring. I do not see but a quiet mind may live as contentedly there, and have as cheering thoughts, as in a palace. The town's poor seem to me often to live the most independent lives of any. Maybe they are simply great enough to receive without misgiving. Most think that they are above being supported by the town ; but it oftener happens that they are not above supporting themselves by dishonest means, which should be more disreputable. Cultivate poverty like a garden herb, like sage. Do not trouble yourself to get new things, whether clothes or friends. Turn the old ; return to them. Things do not change : we change. Sell your clothes and keep your thoughts. God will see that you do not want society. If I were confined to the corner of a garret all my days, like a spider, the world would be just as large to me while I had my thoughts about me. The philosopher said : 'From an army of three divisions one can take away its general, and put it in disorder ; from the the man the most abject and vulgar one cannot take away his thought.' Do not seek so anxiously to be developed, to subject yourself to many influences to be played on ; it is all dissipation. Humility like darkness reveals the heavenly lights. The shadows of poverty and meanness gather around us, 'and lo ! creation widens to our view.'

We are often reminded that if there were bestowed on us the wealth of Croesus, our aims must still be the same, and our means essentially the same. Moreover, if you are restricted in your range by poverty, if you cannot buy books and newspapers, for instance, you are but confined in the most significant experiences: you are compelled to deal with the material which yields the most sugar and the most starch. It is life near the bone where it is sweetest. You are defended from being a trifler. No man loses ever on a lower level by magnanimity on a higher. Superfluous wealth can buy superfluities only. Money is not required to buy one necessity of the soul.

Here or Nowhere is our Heaven

MEN nowhere, East or West, live yet a *natural* life, round which the vine clings, and which the elm willingly shadows. Man would desecrate it by his touch, and so the beauty of the world remains veiled to him. He needs not only to be spiritualised, but *naturalised*, on the soil of earth. Who shall conceive what kind of roof the heavens might extend over him, what seasons minister to him, and what employment dignify his life! Only the convalescent raise the veil of Nature. An immortality in his life would confer immortality on his abode. The winds should be his breath,

the seasons his moods, and he should impart of his serenity to Nature herself. But such as we know him he is ephemeral like the scenery which surrounds him, and does not aspire to an enduring existence. When we come down into the distant village, visible from the mountain-top, the nobler inhabitants with whom we peopled it have departed, and left only vermin in its desolate streets. It is the imagination of poets which puts those brave speeches into the mouths of their heroes. They may fain that Cato's last words were

> The earth, the air, and seas I know, and all
> The joys and horrors of their peace and wars;
> And now will view the Gods' state and the stars;

but such are not the thoughts nor the destiny of common men. What is this heaven which they expect, if it is no better than they expect? Are they prepared for a better than they can now imagine? Where is the heaven of him who dies on a stage in a theatre? Here or nowhere is our heaven.

WHITTIER

The Barefoot Boy

BLESSINGS on the little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;

With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art,—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye,—
Outward sunshine, inward joy;
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

O for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wildflower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,

Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the groundnut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of grey hornet artisans!—
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy,—
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

O for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,

Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too,
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

O for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread,—
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, grey and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;
And to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch: pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-spread the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through

Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil;
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

The Trailing Arbutus

I WANDERED lonely where the pine-trees made
Against the bitter East their barricade,
And, guided by its sweet
Perfume, I found, within a narrow dell,
The trailing spring flower tinted like a shell
Amid dry leaves and mosses at my feet.

From under dead boughs, for whose loss the pines
Moaned ceaseless overhead, the blossoming vines
Lifted their glad surprise,

While yet the bluebird smoothed in leafless trees
His feathers ruffled by the chill sea-breeze,
And snow-drifts lingered under April skies.

As, pausing, o'er the lonely flower I bent,
I thought of lives thus lowly, clogged and pent,
Which yet find room,
Through care and cumber, coldness and decay,
To lend a sweetness to the ungenial day,
And make the sad earth happier for their bloom.

The Last Walk in Autumn

I KNOW not how, in other lands,
The changing seasons come and go,
What splendours fall on Syrian sands,
What purple lights on Alpine snow!
Nor how the pomp of sunrise waits
On Venice at her watery gates;
A dream alone to me is Arno's vale,
And the Alhambra's halls are but a traveller's tale.

Yet, on life's current, he who drifts
Is one with him who rows or sails;
And he who wanders widest lifts
No more of beauty's jealous veils

Than he who from his doorway sees
The miracle of flowers and trees,
Feels the warm Orient in the noonday air,
And from cloud minaret hears the sunset call to prayer?

The eye may well be glad, that looks
Where Pharpar's fountains rise and fall;
But he who sees his native brooks
Laugh in the sun, has seen them all.
The marble palaces of Ind
Rise round him in the snow and wind;
From his lone sweetbrier Persian Hafiz smiles,
And Rome's cathedral awe is in his woodland aisles.

And thus it is my fancy blends
The near at hand and far and rare;
And while the same horizon bends
Above the silver-sprinkled hair
Which flashed the light of morning skies
On childhood's wonder-lifted eyes,
Within its round of sea and sky and field,
Earth wheels with all her zones, the Kosmos stands revealed.

And thus the sick man on his bed,
The toiler to his task-work bound,
Behold their prison-walls outspread,
Their clipped horizon widen round!

While freedom-giving fancy waits,
Like Peter's angel at the gates,
The power is theirs to baffle care and pain,
To bring the lost world back, and make it theirs again!

What lack of goodly company,
When masters of the ancient lyre
Obey my call, and trace for me
Their words of mingled tears and fire!
I talk with Bacon, grave and wise,
I read the world with Pascal's eyes;
And priest and sage, with solemn brows austere,
And poets, garland-bound, the Lords of Thought, draw near.

Methinks, O friend, I hear thee say,
'In vain the human heart we mock;
Bring living guests who love the day,
Not ghosts who fly at crow of cock!
The herbs we share with flesh and blood
Are better than ambrosial food,
With laurelled shades.' I grant it, nothing loath,
But doubly blest is he who can partake of both.

He who might Plato's banquet grace,
Have I not seen before me sit,
And watched his puritanic face,
With more than Eastern wisdom lit?

Shrewd mystic! who, upon the back
Of his Poor Richard's Almanack,
Writing the Sufi's song, the Gentoo's dream,
Links Menu's age of thought to Fulton's age of steam!

Here too, of answering love secure,
Have I not welcomed to my hearth
The gentle pilgrim troubadour,
Whose songs have girdled half the earth!
Whose pages, like the magic mat
Whereon the Eastern lover sat,
Have borne me over Rhineland's purple vines,
And Nubia's tawny sands, and Phrygia's mountain pines!

And he, who to the lettered wealth
Of ages adds the lore unpriced,
The wisdom and the moral health,
The ethics of the school of Christ;
The statesman to his holy trust,
As the Athenian archon, just,
Struck down, exiled like him for truth alone,
Has he not graced my home with beauty all his own?

What greetings smile, what farewells wave,
What loved ones enter and depart!
The good, the beautiful, the brave,
The Heaven-lent treasures of the heart!

How conscious seems the frozen sod
And beechen slope whereon they trod!
The oak-leaves rustle, and the dry grass bends
Beneath the shadowy feet of lost or absent friends.

Then ask not why to these bleak hills
I cling as clings the tufted moss,
To bear the winter's lingering chills,
The mocking spring's perpetual loss.
I dream of lands where summer smiles,
And soft winds blow from spicy isles,
But scarce would Ceylon's breath of flowers be sweet,
Could I not feel thy soil, New England, at my feet!

Home of my heart! to me more fair
Than gay Versailles or Windsor's halls,
The painted, shingly town-house where
The freeman's vote for Freedom falls!
The simple roof where prayer is made,
Than Gothic groin and colonnade;
The living temple of the heart of man,
Than Rome's sky-mocking vault, or many-spired Milan!

And sweet homes nestle in these dales,
And perch along these wooded swells;
And, blest beyond Arcadian vales,
They hear the sound of Sabbath bells!

Here dwells no perfect man sublime
Nor woman winged before her time,
But with the faults and follies of the race,
Old home-bread virtues hold their not unhonoured
place.

Here manhood struggles for the sake
Of mother, sister, daughter, wife,
The graces and the loves which make
The music of the march of life;
And woman, in her daily round
Of duty, walks on holy ground.
No unpaid menial tills the soil, nor here
Is the bad lesson learned at human rights to sneer.

Then let the icy north-wind blow
The trumpets of the coming storm,
To arrowy sleet and blinding snow
Yon slanting lines of rain transform.
Young hearts shall hail the drifted cold,
As gaily as I did of old;
And I, who watch them through the frosty pane,
Unenvious, live in them my boyhood o'er again.

Snow-bound

ALL day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before;
Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.

No church-bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak,
A solitude made more intense
By dreary-voicèd elements,
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
And on the glass the unmeaning beat
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.
We minded that the sharpest ear
The buried brooklet could not hear,
The music of whose liquid lip
Had been to us companionship,
And, in our lonely life, had grown
To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,
We piled, with care, our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back,—
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
And on its top the stout back-stick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,

And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
While radiant with a mimic flame
Outside the sparkling drift became,
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed,
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,

The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
O Time and Change!—with hair as gray
As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now,—
The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,
Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,
Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
No step is on the conscious floor!

Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust
(Since He who knows our need is just),
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.

We sped the time with stories old,
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
Or stammered from our school-book lore
'The Chief of Gambia's golden shore'.
How often since, when all the land
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
As if a trumpet called, I've heard
Dame Mercy Warren's rousing word:
'*Does not the voice of reason cry,*
Claim the first right which Nature gave,
From the red scourge of bondage fly,
Nor deign to live a burdened slave!'
Our father rode again his ride
On Memphremagog's wooded side;
Sat down again to moose and samp
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
Beneath St. François' hemlock trees;
Again for him the moonlight shone
On Norman cap and bodiced zone;
Again he heard the violin play
Which led the village dance away,
And mingled in its merry whirl
The grandam and the laughing girl.
Or, nearer home, our steps he led

Where Salisbury's level marshes spread
  Mile-wide as flies the laden bee ;
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
  The low green prairies of the sea.
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,
  And round the rocky Isles of Shoals
  The hake-broil on the drift-wood coals ;
The chowder on the sand-beach made,
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.
We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
And dream and sign and marvel told
To sleepy listeners as they lay
Stretched idly on the salted hay,
Adrift along the winding shores,
  When favouring breezes deigned to blow
  The square sail of the gundelow,
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cochecho town,
And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
  So rich and picturesque and free
  (The common unrhymed poetry

Of simple life and country ways),
The story of her early days,—
She made us welcome to her home ;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room ;
We stole with her a frightened look
At the grey wizard's conjuring-book,
The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country-side ;
We heard the hawks at twilight play
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,
The loon's weird laughter far away ;
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild-geese calling loud
Beneath the grey November cloud.
Then, haply, with a look more grave,
And soberer tone, some tale she gave
From painful Sewell's ancient tome,
Beloved in every Quaker home,
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,
Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint,—
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint !—

Our uncle, innocent of books,
Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,

The ancient teachers never dumb
Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.
In moons and tides and weather wise,
He read the clouds as prophecies,
And foul or fair could well divine,
By many an occult hint and sign,
Holding the cunning-warded keys
To all the woodcraft mysteries;
Himself to Nature's heart so near
That all her voices in his ear
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
Like Apollonius of old,
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
Or Hermes who interpreted
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;
A simple, guileless, childlike man,
Content to live where life began;
Strong only on his native grounds,
The little world of sights and sounds
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,
Whereof his fondly partial pride
The common features magnified,
As Surrey hills to mountains grew
In White of Selborne's loving view,—
He told how teal and loon he shot,
And how the eagle's eggs he got,
The feats on pond and river done,
The prodigies of rod and gun;
Till, warming with the tales he told,

Forgotten was the outside cold,
The bitter wind unheeded blew,
From ripening corn the pigeons flew,
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
Went fishing down the river-brink.
In fields with bean or clover gay
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,
  Peered from the doorway of his cell;
The musk-rat plied the mason's trade,
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;
And from the shag-bark overhead
  The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I see and hear,—
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome wheresoe'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home,—
Called up her girlhood memories,
The huskings and the apple-bees,
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
A golden woof-thread of romance.

For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;
Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
The morning dew, that dries so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,
From glossy tress to thin grey hair,
All unprofaned she held apart
The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
Her evening task the stand beside;
A full, rich nature, free to trust,
Truthful, and almost sternly just,
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
And make her generous thought a fact,
Keeping with many a light disguise
The secret of self-sacrifice.
O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
That Heaven itself could give thee—rest,
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!
How many a poor one's blessing went
With thee beneath the low green tent
Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart

Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
Now bathed within the fadeless green
And holy peace of Paradise.
Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,
Or from the shade of saintly palms,
Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago :—
The chill weight of the winter snow
For months upon her grave has lain ;
And now, when summer south-winds blow
And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak,
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad ; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness ; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,

Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,
What change can reach the wealth I hold?
What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon
Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at need the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
Shall I not see thee waiting stand.
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

At last the great logs, crumbling low,
Sent out a dull and duller glow,
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely warning sign
Its black hand to the hour of nine.
That sign the pleasant circle broke:
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray,
And laid it tenderly away,
Then roused himself to safely cover
The dull red brands with ashes over,
And while, with care, our mother laid

The work aside, her steps she stayed
One moment, seeking to express
Her grateful sense of happiness
For food and shelter, warmth and health,
And love's contentment more than wealth,
With simple wishes (not the weak,
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,
But such as warm the generous heart,
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
That none might lack, that bitter night,
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard
The wind that round the gables roared,
With now and then a ruder shock,
Which made our very bedsteads rock.
We heard the loosened clapboards tost,
The board-nails snapping in the frost;
And on us, through the unplastered wall,
Felt the light sifted snow-flakes fall.
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
When hearts are light and life is new;
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
Till in the summer-land of dreams
They softened to the sound of streams,
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Clasp, Angel of the backward look
And folded wings of ashen gray

And voice of echoes far away,
The brazen covers of thy book;
The weird palimpsest old and vast
Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past:
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
The characters of joy and woe;
The monographs of outlived years,
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
Green hills of life that slope to death,
And haunts of home, whose vista'd trees
Shade off to mournful cypresses
With the white amaranths underneath.
Even while I look, I can but heed
The restless sands' incessant fall,
Importunate hours that hours succeed,
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
And duty keeping pace with all.

Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
I hear again the voice that bids
The dreamer leave his dream mid-way
For larger hopes and graver fears:
Life greatens in these later years,
The century's aloe flowers to-day!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life,
Some Truce of God which breaks its strife,
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
Dreaming in throngful city ways

Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
And dear and early friends—the few
Who yet remain—shall pause to view
These Flemish pictures of old days;
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
And stretch the hands of memory forth
To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!
And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odours blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveller owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air.

JOHN BURROUGHS

Homeliness

TO a countryman like myself, not born to a great river or an extensive water-view, these things, I think, grow wearisome after a time. He becomes surfeited to a beauty that is alien to him. He longs for something more homely, private, and secluded. Scenery may be too fine or too grand and imposing for one's daily and hourly view. It

tires after a while. It demands a mood that comes to you only at intervals. Hence it is never wise to build your house on the most ambitious spot in the landscape. Rather seek out a more humble and secluded nook or corner, which you can fill and warm with your domestic and home instincts and affections. In some things the half is often more satisfying than the whole. A glimpse of the Hudson River between hills or through openings in the trees wears better with me than a long expanse of it constantly spread out before me. One day I had an errand to a farmhouse nestled in a little valley or basin at the foot of a mountain. The earth put out protecting arms all about it—a low hill with an orchard on one side, a sloping pasture on the other, and the mountain, with the skirts of its mantling forests, close at hand in the rear. How my heart warmed toward it! I had been so long perched high upon the banks of a great river, in sight of all the world, exposed to every wind that blows, with a horizon-line that sweeps over half a county, that, quite unconsciously to myself, I was pining for a nook to sit down in. I was hungry for the private and the circumscribed; I knew it when I saw this sheltered farmstead. I had long been restless and dissatisfied—a vague kind of home sickness; now I knew the remedy. Hence when, not long afterwards, I was offered a tract of wild land,

barely a mile from home, that contained a secluded nook and a few acres of level, fertile land shut off from the vain and noisy world of railroads, steamboats, and yachts, by a wooded precipitous mountain, I quickly closed the bargain, and built me a rustic house there, which I call "Slabsides," because its outer walls are covered with slabs. I might have given it a prettier name, but not one more fit or more in keeping with the mood that brought me thither. A slab is the first cut from the log, and the bark goes with it. It is like the first cut from the loaf, which we call the crust, and which the children reject, but which we older ones often prefer. I wanted to take a fresh cut of life—something that had the bark on, or, if you please, that was like a well-browned and hardened crust. After three years I am satisfied with the experiment. Life has a different flavour here. It is reduced to simpler terms; its complex equations all disappear. The exact value of x may still elude me, but I can press it hard; I have shorn it of many of its disguises and entanglements.

Farm Life

I HAVE thought that a good test of civilization, perhaps one of the best, is country life. Where country life is safe and enjoyable, where many of

the conveniences and appliances of the town are joined to the large freedom and large benefits of the country, a high state of civilization prevails. Is there any proper country life in Spain, in Mexico, in the South American States? Man has always dwelt in cities, but he has not always in the same sense been a dweller in the country.

Rude and barbarous people build cities. Hence, paradoxical as it may seem, the city is older than the country. Truly, man made the city, and after he became sufficiently civilized, not afraid of solitude, and knew on what terms to live with nature, God promoted him to live in the country. The necessities of defence, the fear of enemies, built the first city, built Rome, Athens, Carthage, Paris. The weaker the law, the stronger the city. After Cain slew Abel he went out and built a city, and murder or the fear of murder, robbery or the fear of robbery, have built most of the cities since. Penetrate into the heart of Africa, and you will find the people, or tribes, all living in villages or little cities. You step from the jungle or forest into the town; there is no country. The best and most hopeful feature in any people is undoubtedly the instinct that leads them to the country and to take root there, and not that which sends them flocking to the town and its distractions.

The lighter the snow, the more it drifts; and

III

VOICES OF YESTERDAY

Then to the wilderness I fled.—
There among Alpine snows
And pastoral huts I hid my head,
And sought and found repose.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Better a crust of black bread than a mountain of paper confections.
Better a daisy in earth than a dahlia cut and gathered.
Better a cowslip with root than a prize carnation without it.

CLOUGH.

So grew my own small life complete
As nature obtained the best of me.

BROWNING.

For the great law of culture is: Let each become all that he was credited capable of being; expand, if possible, to his full growth; resisting all impediments, casting off all foreign, especially all noxious adhesions; and show himself at last in his own shape and stature, be these what they may.

CARLYLE.

CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER

Resuscitation of Fancy

THE edge of thought was blunted by the stress
Of the hard world; my fancy had wax'd dull,
All nature seem'd less nobly beautiful,—
Robbed of her grandeur and her loveliness;
Methought the Muse within my heart had died,
Till, late, awaken'd at the break of day,
Just as the East took fire and doff'd its gray,
The rich preparatives of light I spied;
But one sole star—none other anywhere—
A wild-rose odour from the fields was borne;
The lark's mysterious joy fill'd earth and air,
And from the wind's top met the hunter's horn;
The aspen trembled wildly, and the morn
Breath'd up in rosy clouds, divinely fair!

TENNYSON

Enid's Song

TURN, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud;
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm, and cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;
With that wild wheel we go not up or down;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;
For man is man and master of his fate.

Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring crowd;
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

CARLYLE

The Sublime Dignity of Labour

TWO men I honour, and no third. First, the toil-worn Craftsman that with earth-made Implement laboriously conquers the Earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard Hand; crooked, coarse; wherein notwithstanding lies a cunning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the Sceptre of this Planet. Venerable too is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled, with its rude intelligence; for it is the face of a Man living manlike. Oh, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly-entreated Brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers

so deformed: thou wert our Conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. For in thee too lay a god-created Form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of Labour: and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on: *thou* art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.

A second man I honour, and still more highly: Him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the bread of Life. Is not he too in his duty; endeavouring towards inward Harmony; revealing this, by act or by word, through all his outward endeavours, be they high or low? Highest of all, when his outward and his inward endeavour are one: when we can name him Artist; not earthly Craftsman only, but inspired Thinker, who with heaven-made Implement conquers Heaven for us! If the poor and humble toil that we have Food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he may have Light, have Guidance, Freedom, Immortality? —These two, in all their degrees, I honour: all else is chaff or dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.

Unspeakably touching is it, however, when I find both dignities united; and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also

toiling inwardly for the highest. Sublimer in this world know I nothing than a Peasant Saint, could such now anywhere be met with. Such a one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendour of Heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of Earth, like a light shining in great darkness.

JANE WELSH CARLYLE

To a Swallow Building Under Our Eaves

THOU too hast travelled, little fluttering thing—
Hast seen the world, and now thy weary wing
Thou too must rest.
But much, my little bird, couldst thou but tell,
I'd give to know why here thou lik'st so well
To build thy nest.

For thou hast passed fair places in thy flight;
A world lay all beneath thee where to light;
And strange thy taste,
Of all the vari'd scenes that met thine eye—
Of all the spots for building 'neath the sky—
To choose this waste.

Did fortune try thee? was thy little purse
Perchance run low, and thou, afraid of worse,
Felt here secure?

Ah, no! thou need'st not gold, thou happy one!
Thou know'st it not. Of all God's creatures, man
Alone is poor!

What was it, then? some mystic turn of thought,
Caught under German eaves, and hither brought,
Marring thine eye
For the world's loveliness, till thou art grown
A sober thing that dost but mope and moan
Not knowing why?

Nay, if thy mind be sound, I need not ask,
Since here I see thee working at thy task
With wing and beak.
A well-laid scheme doth that small head contain,
At which thou work'st, brave bird, with might and main,
Nor more need'st seek.

In truth, I rather take it thou hast got
By instinct wise much sense about thy lot,
And hast small care
Whether an Eden or a desert be
Thy home so thou remain'st alive, and free
To skim the air.

God speed thee, pretty bird; may thy small nest
With little ones all in good time be blest.
I love thee much;

For well thou managest that life of thine,
While I ! oh ask not what I do with mine !
Would I were such !

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE

Cover Me With Your Everlasting Arms

COVER me with your everlasting arms,
Ye guardian giants of this solitude !
From the ill-sight of men, and from the rude,
Tumultuous din of yon wild world's alarms !
Oh, knit your mighty limbs around, above,
And close me in for ever ! let me dwell
With the wood spirits, in the darkest cell
That ever with your verdant locks ye wove.
The air is full of countless voices, joined
In one eternal hymn ; the whispering wind,
The shuddering leaves, the hidden water-springs,
The work-song of the bees, whose honeyed wings
Hang in the golden tresses of the lime,
Or buried lie in purple beds of thyme.

Expostulation

WHAT though the sun must set, and darkness come,
Shall we turn coldly from the light,
And o'er the heavens call an earlier gloom,

Because the longest day must end in night?
What though the golden summer flies so fast,
Shall we neglect the rosy wreaths she brings,
Because their blooming sweetness may not last,
And winter comes apace with snowy wings?
What though this world be but the journeying land,
Where those who love but meet to part again;
Where as we clasp in welcome friendship's hand
That greeting clasp becomes a parting strain:
'Tis better to be blest for one short hour,
Than never know delight of love or joy,
Friendship, or mirth, or happiness, or power,
And all that Time creates, and must destroy.

EMILY BRONTE

Often Rebuked

OFTEN rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things which cannot be:

To-day, I will seek not the shadowy region;
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality,

And not among the half-distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the grey flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

What have those lonely mountains worth revealing?
More glory and more grief than I can tell:
The earth that wakes one human heart to feeling
Can centre both the worlds of Heaven and Hell.

The Old Stoic

RICHES I hold in light esteem,
And Love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream,
That vanished with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is, 'Leave the heart that now I bear,
And give me liberty'!

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'Tis all that I implore;
In life in death, a chainless soul,
With courage to endure.

ANNE BRONTE

Home

HOW brightly glistening in the sun
The woodland ivy plays!
While yonder beeches from their barks
Reflect his silver rays.

That sun surveys a lovely scene
From softly smiling skies;
And wildly through unnumbered trees
The wind of winter sighs:

Now loud, it thunders o'er my head,
And now in distance dies.
But give me back my barren hills
Where colder breezes rise;

Where scarce the scattered, stunted trees
Can yield an answering swell,
But where a wilderness of heath
Returns the sound as well.

For yonder garden, fair and wide,
With groves of evergreen,
Long winding walks, and borders trim,
And velvet lawns between;

Restore to me that little spot,
With grey walls compassed round,
Where knotted grass neglected lies,
And weeds usurp the ground.

Though all around this mansion high
Invites the foot to roam,
And though its walls are fair within—
Oh, give me back my HOME!

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

Qua Cursum Ventus

AS ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so—but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered—
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there!

Say not the Struggle Nought Availeth

SAY not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars ;
  It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
  And, but for joy, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
  Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
  Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
  When daylight comes, comes in the light ;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
  But westward, look, the land is bright.

BARNES

Zummer Winds

LET me work, but mid noo tie
  Hold me vrom the oben sky,
When zummer winds, in playÿsome flight,
Do blow on vields in noon-day light,
Or ruslèn trees, in twilight night.
  Sweet's a stroll,
By flow'ry knowl, or blue-feäcèd pool
That zummer win's do ruffle cool.

When the moon's broad light do vill
Plaïns, a-sheenèn down the hill;
A-glitterèn on window glass,
O then, while zummer win's do pass
The riddled brook, an' swaÿèn grass,
Sweet's a walk,
Where we do talk, wi' feäces bright,
In whispers in the peacevul night.

When the swaÿèn men do mow
Flow'ry grass, wi' sweepèn blow,
In het a-most enough to dry
The flat-spread clote-leaf that do lie
Upon the stream a-stealèn by,
Sweet's their rest,
Upon the breast o' knap or mound
Out where the gookoo's vaïce do sound.

Where the sleek-häir'd maid do zit
Out o' door to zew or knit,
Below the elem where the spring
'S a-runnèn, an' the road do bring
The people by to hear her zing,
On the green,
Where she's a-zeen, an' she can zee
O gaÿ is she below the tree.

Come, O zummer wind, an' bring
Sounds o' birds as they do zing,

An' bring the smell o' bloomèn maÿ,
An' bring the smell o' new-mow'd haÿ ;
Come fan my feäce as I do straÿ
Fan the heäir
O' Jessie feäir ; fan her cool,
By the weäves o' stream or pool.

Oben Vields

WELL, you mid keep the town an' street,
Wi' grassless stwones to beät your veet,
An' zunless windows where your brows
Be never cooled by swaÿèn boughs ;
An' let me end, as I begun,
My days in oben air an' zun,
Where zummer win's a-blowèn sweet,
Wi' blooth o' trees as white's a sheet ;
Or swaÿèn boughs a-bendèn low
Wi' rip'nèn apples in a row,
An' we a-risèn rathe do meet
The bright'nèn dawn wi' dewy veet,
An' leäve, at night, the vootless groves,
To rest 'ithin our thatchen oves.
An' here our children still do bruise
The deäisy buds wi' tiny shoes,
As we did meet avore em, free
Vrom ceäre, in plaÿ below the tree.
An' there in me'th their lively eyes

Do glissen in the zunny skies,
As aïr do blow, wi' leäzy peäce
To cool in sheäde, their burnèn feäce.
Where leaves o' spreadèn docks do hide
The zawpit's timber-lwoaded zide,
An' trees do lie, wi' scraggy limbs,
Among the deäisy's crimson rims.
An' they, so proud, wi' eärms a-spread
To keep their balance good, do tread
Wi' ceäreful steps o' tiny zoles
The narrow zides o' trees an' poles.
An' zoo I'll leave vor your light veet
The peävement o' the zunless street,
While I do end, as I begun,
My days in oben air and zun.

I Got Two Vields

I GOT two vields, an' I don't ceäre
What squire mid have a bigger sheäre.
My little zummer-leäze do stratch
All down the hangèn to a patch
O' meäd, between a hedge an' rank
Ov elems, an' a river bank.
Where yollow clotes, in spreadèn beds
O' floatèn leaves, do lift their heads
By bendèn bulrushes and zedge
A-swaÿèn at the water's edge,

Below the withy that do spread
Athirt the brook his grey-leav'd head.
An' eltrot flowers, milky white,
Do catch the slantèn evenèn light ;
An' in the meäple boughs, along
The hedge, do ring the blackbird's zong ;
Or in the day, a-vleèn drough
The leafy trees, the whoa'se gookoo
Do zing to mowers that do zet
Their zives on end, an' stan' to whet.
From my wold house among the trees
A leäne do goo along the leäze
O' yollow gravel, down between
Two mossy banks vor ever green.
An' trees, a-hangèn overhead,
Do hide a trinklèn gully-bed,
A-cover'd by a bridge vor hoss
Or man a-voot to come across.
Zoo wi' my hwomestead, I don't ceäre
What squire mid have a bigger sheäre !

The Milk-maïd o' the Farm

O POLL'S the milk-maïd o' the farm !
An' Poll's so happy out in groun',
Wi' her white païl below her eärm
As if she wore a goolden crown.

An' Poll don't zit up half the night,
Nor lie vor half the day a-bed;
An' zoo her eyes be sparklèn bright,
An' zoo her cheäks be bloomèn red.

In zummer mornèns, when the lark
Do rouse the litty lad an' lass
To work, then she's the vu'st to mark
Her steps along the dewy grass.

An' in the evenèn, when the zun
Do sheen ageän the western brows
O' hills, where bubblèn brooks do run,
There she do zing bezide her cows.

An' ev'ry cow of hers do stand,
An' never overzet her pail;
Nor try to kick her nimble hand,
Nor switch her wi' her heavy tail.

Noo leädy, wi' her muff an' vail
Do walk wi' sich a steätely tread
As she do, wi' her milkèn pail
A-balanc'd on her comely head.

An' she, at mornèn an' at night,
Do skim the yollow cream, an' mwold
An' wring her cheeses red an' white,
An' zee the butter vetch'd and roll'd.

An' in the barken or the ground,
  The chaps do always do their best
To milk the vu'st their own cows round,
  An' then help her to milk the rest.

Zoo Poll's the milk-maïd o' the farm!
  An' Poll's so happy out in groun',
Wi' her white païl below her eärm,
  As if she wore a goolden crown.

Milken Time

'TWER when the busy birds did vlee,
  Wi' sheenèn wings, vrom tree to tree,
To build upon the mossy lim',
Their hollow nestes' rounded rim;
The while the zun, a-zinkèn' low,
Did roll along his evenèn bow
I come along where wide-horn'd cows,
'Ithin a nook, a-screen'd by boughs,
Did stan' an' flip the white-hoop'd pails
Wi' heairy tufts o' swingèn taïls;
An' there wer Jenny Coom a-gone
Along the path a vew steps on.
A-beärèn on her head, upstraïght,
Her païl, wi' slowly-riddèn waight,
An' hoops a-sheenèn, lily-white,
Agean the evenèn's slanting light;
An' zo I took her païl, an' left

Her neck a-freed vrom all his heft;
An' she a-lookèn up an' down,
Wi' sheäpely head an' glossy crown,
Then took my zide, an' kept my peace
A-talkèn on wi' smilèn feace,
An zettèn things in sich a light,
I'd fain ha' heär'd her talk all night;
An' when I brought her milk avore
The geäte, she took it into door,
An' if her païl had but allow'd
Her head to fall, she would ha' bow'd,
An' still as 'twer, I had the zight
Ov her sweet smile droughout the night.

The New House a-Gettèn Wold

AH! when our wedded life begun,
Theäse clean-wall'd house of ours wer new;
Wi' thatch as yollor as the zun
Avore the cloudless sky o' blue;
The sky o' blue that then did bound
The blue-hilled worold's flow'ry ground.

An' we've a-vound it weather-brown'd,
As Spring-tide blossoms oben'd white,
Or Fall did shed, on zunburnt ground,
Red apples vrom their leafy height:
Their leafy height, that Winter soon
Left leafless to the cool-feäced moon.

An' raïn-bred moss ha' staïn'd wi' green
  The smooth-feäced wall's white-morter'd streaks,
The while our childern zot between
  Our seats avore the fleäme's red peaks:
The fleäme's red peaks, till axan white
Did quench em vor the long-sleep'd night.

The bloom that woonce did overspread
  Your rounded cheäk, as time went by,
A-shrinkèn to a patch o' red,
  Did feäde so soft's the evenèn sky:
The evenèn sky, my faithful wife,
O' days as feäir's our happy life.

The Bench by the Garden Wall

AS day might cool, and in the pool,
  The shaded waves might ripple dim,
We used to walk, or sit in talk,
Below the limetree's leaning limb,
Where willows' drooping boughs might fall
Around us, near the garden wall.

Where children's heads on evening beds,
In dull-ear'd sleep were settled sound,
The moon's bright ring would slowly spring,
From down behind the woody mound,
With light that slanted down on all
The willows nigh the garden wall.

By roof-eaves spread up over head,
There clung the wren's brown nest of hay,
And wind would make the ivy shake,
And your dark locks of hair to play,
As you would tell the news of all
The day, beside the garden wall.

The while might run, the summer sun,
On high, above the green-tree'd land,
Few days would come, for jaunts from home,
And none without some work on hand,
Yet we enjoy'd at eveningfall
Our bench beside the garden wall.

Our flow'rs would blow, our fruit would grow,
To hang in air, or lie on ground,
Our bees would hum, or go and come
By small-door'd hives, well hackled round;
All this we had, and over all
Our bench beside the garden wall.

The Ivy

UPON theäse knap I'd sooner be
The ivy that do climb the tree,
Than bloom the gaÿest rwose a-tied
An' trimm'd upon the house's zide.
The rwose mid be the maidens' pride,

But still the ivy's wild an' free ;
An' what is all that life can gi'e,
'Ithout a free light heart, John ?

The creepèn sheade mid steal too soon
Upon the rwose in afternoon ;
But here the zun do drow his het
Vrom when do rise till when do zet,
To dry the leaves the raïn do wet.
An' evenèn aïr do bring along
The merry deäiry-maïden's zong,
The zong o' free light hearts, John.

Oh ! why do vo'k so often chaïn
Their pinèn minds vor love o' gaïn,
An' gi'e their innocence to rise
A little in the worold's eyes ?
If pride could lift us to the skies,
What man do value God do slight,
An' all is nothèn in his zight
'Ithout an honest heart, John.

An ugly feäce can't bribe the brooks
To show it back young han'some looks,
Nor crooked vo'k intice the light
To cast their zummer sheädes upright :
Noo goold can blind our Meäker's zight.
An' what's the odds what cloth do hide
The bosom that do hold inside
A free an' honest heart, John ?

May

COME out o' door, 'tis Spring! 'tis Maÿ;
The trees be green, the vields be gaÿ;
The weather's warm, the winter blast,
Wi' all his traïn o' clouds, is past;
The zun do rise while vo'k do sleep,
To teäke a higher daily zweep,
Wi' cloudless feäce a-flingèn down
His sparklèn light upon the groun'.
The aïr's a-streamèn soft,—come drow
The windor open; let it blow
In drough the house, where vire, an' door
A-shut, kept out the cwold avore.
Come, let the vew cold embers die,
An' come below the open sky;
An' wear your best, vor vear the groun'
In colours gaÿ mid sheäme your gown:
An' goo an' rig wi' me a mile
Or two up over geäte an' stile,
Drough zunny parrocks that do leäd,
Wi' crooked hedges, to the meäd,
Where elems high, in steätely ranks,
Do rise vrom yollow cowslip-banks,
An' birds do twitter vrom the spraÿ
O' bushes deck'd wi' snow-white maÿ;
An' gil'cups, wi' the deäisy bed,
Be under ev'ry step you tread.

We'll wind up roun' the hill, an' look
All down the thickly-timber'd nook,
Out where the squier's house do show
His grey-wall'd peaks up drough the row
O' sheädy elems, where the rook
Do build her nest; an' where the brook
Do creep along the meäds, an' lie
To catch the brightness o' the sky;
An' cows, in water to theïr knees,
Do stan' a-whiskèn off the vlees.

Mother o' blossoms, and ov all
That's feäir a-vield vrom Spring till Fall,
The gookoo over white-weäv'd seas
Do come to zing in thy green trees,
An' buttervlees, in giddy flight,
Do gleäm the mwost by thy gaÿ light.
Oh! when, at last, my fleshly eyes
Shall shut upon the vields an' skies,
Mid zummer's zunny days be gone,
An' winter's clouds be comèn on:
Nor mid I draw upon the e'th,
O' thy sweet aïr my leätest breath;
Alassen I mid want to staÿ
Behine' for thee, O flow'ry Maÿ!

The Hwomestead

IF I had all the land my zight
  Can overlook vrom Chalwell hill,
Vrom Sherborn left to Blanvord right,
  Why I could be but happy still.
An' I be happy wi' my spot
O' freehold ground an' mossy cot,
An' shoulden get a better lot
  If I had all my will.

My orcha'd's wide, my trees be young;
  An' they do bear such heavy crops,
Their boughs, lik' onion-rwopes a-hung,
  Be all a-trigg'd to year, wi' props.
I got some geärden groun' to dig,
A parrock, an' a cow an' pig;
I got zome cider vor to swig,
  An' eäle an' malt an' hops.

I'm landlard o' my little farm,
  I'm king 'ithin my little pleäce;
I don't break laws, and don't do harm,
  An' bent a-feäred o' noo man's feäce.
When I'm a-cover'd wi' my thatch,
Noo man do deäre to lift the latch,
Where honest han's do shut the hatch,
  There fear do leäve the pleäce.

My lofty elem trees do screen
  My brown-ruf'd house, an' here below,
My geese do strut athirt the green,
  An' hiss an' flap their wings o' snow;
As I do walk along a rank
Ov apple trees, or by a bank,
Or zit upon a bar or plank,
  To see how things do grow.

Mornèn

WHEN vu'st the breakèn day is red,
  An' grass is dewy wet,
An' roun' the blackberry's a-spread
  The spider's gliss'nèn net,
Then do I dreve the cows across
  The brook that's in a vog,
While they do trot, an' bleäre, an' toss
  Their heads to hook the dog;
Vor the cock do gi'e me warnèn,
    An' light or dark,
    So brisk's a lark,
  I'm up at break o' mornèn.

Avore the maïden's sleep's a-broke
  By window-strickèn zun,
Avore the busy wife's vu'st smoke
  Do curl above the tun,

My day's begun. An' when the zun
'S a-zinkèn in the west,
The work the mornèn brought's a-done,
An' I do goo to rest,
Till the cock do gi'e me warnèn;
An' light or dark,
So brisk's a lark,
I'm up ageän nex' mornèn.

We can't keep back the daily zun,
The wind is never still,
An' never ha' the streams a-done
A runnèn down the hill.
Zoo they that ha' their work to do,
Should do't so soon's they can;
Vor time an' tide will come and goo,
An' never wait vor man,
As the cock do gi'e me warnèn;
When, light or dark,
So brisk's a lark,
I'm up so rathe in mornèn.

We've leäzes where the air do blow,
An' meäds wi' deäiry cows,
An' copse an' lewth an' sheäde below
The overhangèn boughs.
An' when the zun, noo time can tire,
'S a-quenched below the west,

Then we've, avore the bleäzen vire,
A settle vor to rest ;—
To be up ageän nex' mornèn,
So brisk's a lark,
When, light or dark,
The cock do gi'e us warnèn.

Fellowship

WELL here, another year, at least,
We go along with blinking sight,
By smoky dust arising white
Up off our road, to Lincham feast.
With trudging steps of tramping feet,
We souls on foot with foot-folk meet:
For we that cannot hope to ride
For ease or pride, have fellowship.

And so, good father tried to show
To folk with hands on right or left,
Down-pull'd by some great burden's heft,
And trudging weary, to and fro:
That rich men are but one to ten
When reckoned off with working men,
And so have less, the while the poor
Have ten times more of fellowship.

He thought, good man, whatever part
We have to play, we all shall find

That fellowship of kind with kind
Must keep us better up in heart.
And why should working men be shy
Of work, with mostly work-folk by,
While kings must live in lonesome states
With none for mates in fellowship?

Tall chimneys up with high-flown larks,
And houses, roods in length, with sights
Of windows glaring off in lights,
That shoot up slopes of wood-bound parks,
Are far and wide, and not so thick
As poor men's little homes of brick,
By ones or twos, or else in row
So small and low, in fellowship.

But we, wherever we may come,
Have fellowship in hands and loads,
And fellowship of feet on roads,
And lowliness of house and home;
And fellowship in homely fare,
And homely garb for daily wear.
And so may Heaven bless the more
The working poor in fellowship.

Thatchen o' the Rick

AS I were out in meäd last week,
A-thatchèn o' my little rick,
There green young ee-grass, ankle high,
Did sheen below the cloudless sky;
An' over hedge in tother groun',
Among the bennets dry an' brown,
My dun wold meäre, wi' neck a-freed
Vrom Zummer work, did snort an' veed;
An' in the sheäde o' leafy boughs,
My vew wold ragged-cwoated cows
Did rub their zides upon the rails,
Or switch em wi' their heäiry tails.

An' as the mornèn zun rose high
Above my mossy roof clwose by,
The blue smoke curreled up between
The lofty vields o' feädèn green:
A zight that's touchèn when do show
A busy wife is down below,
A-workèn hard to cheer woone's tweil
Wi' her best feäre, an' better smile.
Mid women still in wedlock's yoke
Zend up, wi' love, their own blue smoke,
An' husband's vind their bwoards a-spread
By faïthvul hands when I be dead,
An' noo good men in ouer land

Think lightly o' the weddèn band.
True happiness do bide alwone
Wi' them that ha' their own he'th-stwone
To gather wi' their childern roun',
A-smilèn at the worold's frown.
My bwoys, that brought me thatch an' spars,
Wer down a-taïtèn on the bars,
Or zot a-cuttèn wi' a knife,
Dry eltot-roots to meäke a fife;
Or drevèn woone another round
The rick upon the grassy ground.
An', as the aïer vrom the west
Did fan my burnèn feäce and breast,
An' hoppèn birds, wi' twitt'rèn beaks,
Did show their sheenèn spots and streaks,
Then, wi' my heart a-vill'd wi' love
An' thankvulness to God above,
I didden think ov anything
That I begrudg'd o' lord or king;
Vor I ha' round me, vur or near,
The mwost to love an' nwone to fear,
An' zoo can walk in any pleäce,
An' look the best man in the feäce.
What good do come o' eächèn heads,
Or lièn down in silken beds?
Or what's a coach, if woone do pine
To zee woone's naïghbour's twice as fine?
Contentment is a constant feäst,
He's richest that do want the leäst.

BORROW

Simple Life

GIVE me the haunch of a buck to eat, and to drink Madeira old,
And a gentle wife to rest with, and in my arms to fold,
An Arabic book to study, a Norfolk cob to ride,
And a house to live in shaded with trees, and near to a river side;
With such good things around me, and blessed with good health withal,
Though I should live for a hundred years, for death I would not call.

There's the Wind on the Heath, Brother

'WHAT is your opinion of death, Mr. Petulengro?' said I, as I sat down beside him.

'My opinion of death, brother, is much the same as that in the old song of Pharaoh, which I have heard my grandam sing—

"Cana marel o manus chivios andé puv,
Ta rovel pa leste o chavo ta romi."

When a man dies, he is cast into the earth, and his wife and child sorrow over him. If he has

neither wife nor child, then his father and mother, I suppose; and if he is quite alone in the world, why, then, he is cast into the earth, and there is an end of the matter.'

'And do you think that is the end of a man?'

'There's an end of him, brother, more's the pity.'

'Why do you say so?'

'Life is sweet, brother.'

'Do you think so?'

'Think so! There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?'

'I would wish to die'—

'You talk like a gorgio—which is the same as talking like a fool. Were you a Rommany Chal you would talk wiser. Wish to die, indeed! A Rommany Chal would wish to live for ever!'

'In sickness, Jasper?'

'There's the sun and stars, brother.'

'In blindness, Jasper?'

'There's the wind on the heath, brother; if I could only feel that, I would gladly live for ever. Dosta, we'll go now to the tents and put on the gloves; and I'll try to make you feel what a sweet thing it is to be alive, brother!'

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

The Prayer of Festus

GRANT us, O God! that in thy holy love
The universal people of the world
May grow more great and happy every day;
Mightier, wiser, humbler, too, towards Thee.
And that all ranks, all classes, callings, states
Of life, so far as such seem right to Thee,
May mingle into one, like sister trees,
And so in one stem flourish: that all laws
And powers of government be based and used
In good, and for the people's sake:—that each
May feel himself of consequence to all,
And act as though all saw him; that the whole
The mass of every nation may so do
As is most worthy of the next to God;
For a whole people's souls, each one worth more
Than a mere world of matter, make, combined
A something godlike, something like to Thee.

AUBREY DE VERE

Sorrow

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee; do thou
With courtesy receive him; rise and bow;
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave

Permission first his heavenly feet to lave ;
Then lay before him all thou hast ; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality ; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmoreal calmness: Grief should be,
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate ;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free ;
Strong to consume small troubles ; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting
to the end.

LORD HOUGHTON

The Men of Old

I KNOW not that the men of old
Were better than men now,
Of heart more kind, of hand more bold,
Of more ingenuous brow :
I heed not those that pine for force
A ghost of time to raise,
As if they thus could check the course
Of these appointed days.

Still it is true, and over true,
That I delight to close
This book of life self-wise and new,
And let my thoughts repose

On all that humble happiness
The world has since forgone.—
The daylight of contentedness
That on those faces shone!

With rights, tho' not too closely scanned,
Enjoyed, as far as known,—
With will by no reverse unmanned,—
With pulse of even tone,—
They from to-day and from to-night
Expected nothing more,
Than yesterday and yesternight
Had proffered them before.

To them was life a simple art
Of duties to be done,
A game where each man took his part,
A race where all must run;
A battle whose great scheme and scope
They little cared to know,
Content, as men at arms, to cope
Each with his fronting foe.

Man now his Virtue's diadem
Puts on, and proudly wears,
Great thoughts, great feelings, came to them,
Like instincts, unawares:
Blending their souls' sublimest needs
With tasks of every day.

They went about their gravest deeds,
As noble boys at play.—

And what if nature's fearful wound
They did not probe and bare,
For that their spirits never swooned
To watch the misery there,—
For that their love but flowed more fast,
Their charities more free,
Not conscious what mere drops they cast
Into the evil sea.

A man's best things are nearest him,
Lie close about his feet,
It is the distant and the dim
That we are sick to greet:
For flowers that grow our hands beneath
We struggle and aspire,—
Our hearts must die, except they breathe
The air of fresh desire.

But, Brothers, who up reason's hill
Advance with hopeful cheer,—
O! loiter not, those heights are chill,
As chill as they are clear;
And still restrain your haughty gaze,
The loftier that ye go,
Remembering distance leaves a haze
On all that lies below.

Good Night and Good Morning

A FAIR little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see:
Then smoothed her work, and folded it right,
And said, 'Dear work, Good-night! Good-night!'

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying 'Caw! caw!' on their way to bed:
She said as she watched their curious flight,
'Little black things! Good-night! Good-night!'

The horses neighed, and the oxen lowed,
The sheep's 'Bleat! bleat!' came over the road:
All seeming to say with a quiet delight,
'Good little girl! Good-night! Good-night!'

She did not say to the sun 'Good-night!'
Though she saw him there like a ball of light;
For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

The tall pink fox-glove bowed his head—
The violet curtsied and went to bed;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said on her knees, her favourite prayer.

And while on her pillow she softly lay
She knew nothing more till again it was day:
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
Good-morning! Good-morning! our work is begun!

Happiness

BECAUSE the Few with signal virtue crowned,
The heights and pinnacles of human mind,
Sadder and wearier than the rest are found,
Wish not thy Soul less wise or less refined.
True that the small delights which every day
Cheer and distract the pilgrim are not theirs;
True that, though free from Passion's lawless sway,
A loftier being brings severer cares.
Yet have they special pleasures, even mirth,
By those undreamt of who have only trod
Life's valley smooth; and if the rolling earth
To their nice ear have many a painful tone,
They know, Man does not live by Joy alone,
But by the presence of the power of God.

THOMAS WESTWOOD

Springlets

OVER the winter eaves
The bare boughs clamber and swing—
Through a rustle of withered leaves
I hear the voice of Spring.

Year after year departs
  On pitiless, whirling wing,
But yet in my heart of hearts,
  I feel the touch of the Spring.

Who knows? when in graveyard drear,
  I lie, and the throstles sing,
I may still awake with the year,
  Still hear the voice of the Spring.

KINGSLEY

Dartside

I CANNOT tell what you say, green leaves,
  I cannot tell what you say:
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
  And a word in you this day.

I cannot tell what you say, rosy rocks,
  I cannot tell what you say:
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
  And a word in you this day.

I cannot tell what you say, brown streams,
  I cannot tell what you say:
But I know that in you too a spirit doth live,
  And a word doth speak this day.

'Oh, green is the colour of faith and truth,
And rose the colour of love and youth,
And brown of the fruitful clay.
Sweet Earth is faithful, and fruitful, and young,
And her bridal day shall come ere long,
And you shall know what the rocks and the streams
And the whispering woodlands say.'

Guta's Song

HIGH among the lonely hills,
While I lay beside my sheep,
Rest came down and filled my soul,
From the everlasting deep.

Changeless march the stars above,
Changeless morn succeeds to even;
Still the everlasting hills
Changeless watch the changeless heaven.

See the rivers, how they run,
Changeless toward a changeless sea;
All around is forethought sure,
Fixèd will and stern decree.

Can the sailor move the main?
Will the potter heed the clay?
Mortal! where the spirit drives,
Thither must the wheels obey.

Neither ask, nor fret, nor strive:
Where thy path is, thou shalt go.
He who made the streams of time
Walks these downs to weal or woe.

THOMAS ASHE

Sympathy

IS nature all so beautiful?
The human feeling makes it so:
The sounds we love, the flowers we cull,
Are hallow'd with man's joy or woe.

The little speedwell's tender blue
Is not so pure and delicate,
As is the simple wish in you
That will its tardy advent wait.

The breezy hush, the rustling change,
Of leaves that on the poplar shake,
Are not so sweet, or half so strange,
As flutter in your heart they make.

The tiny drops of dew, that shine
Upon the leaflets new and rare,
Are scarcely half so crystal-fine
As your delight to watch them there.

The wishing for the green of trees
  Is fresher than the leaves that come :
The blowing of a scented breeze
  Is sweetest round a happy home.

The ripple of a tranquil bay,
  The water-lisp in curve or creek,
Are softest on the welcome day
  We trust to find some friend we seek.

O human men and women, all !
  With human feelings, strange and fine !
O hopes, O meanings mystical !
  O joy divine ; O woe divine !

ELIZA COOK

They All Belong to Me

THERE are riches without measure
  Scattered thickly o'er the land ;
There are heaps and heaps of treasure,
  Bright, beautiful, and grand ;
There are forests, there are mountains,
  There are meadows, there are rills,
Forming everlasting fountains
  In the bosoms of the hills ;

There are birds and there are flowers,
The fairest things that be—
And these great and joyful dowers,
Oh! 'they all belong to me.'

There are golden acres bending
In the light of harvest rays,
There are garland branches blending
With the breath of June's sweet days:
There are pasture grasses blowing
In the dewy, moorland shade,
There are herds of cattle lowing
In the midst of bloom and blade;
There are noble elms that quiver,
As the gale comes full and free,
There are alders by the river,
And 'they all belong to me.'

I care not who may reckon
The wheat piled up in sacks,
Nor who has power to beckon
The woodman with his axe;
I care not who hold leases
Of the upland or the dell,
Nor who may count the fleeces
When the flocks are fit to sell.
While there's beauty none can barter
By the greensward and the tree:

Claim who will, by seal and charter,
Yet 'they all belong to me.'

Ye cannot shut the tree in,
Ye cannot hide the hills,
Ye cannot wall the sea in,
Ye cannot choke the rills;
The corn will only nestle
In the broad arms of the sky,
The clover crop must wrestle
With the common wind, or die.
And while these stores of treasure
Are spread where I may see,
By God's high, bounteous pleasure,
'They all belong to me.'

What care I for the profit
The stricken stem may yield?
I have the shadow of it
While upright in the field.
What reck I of the riches
The mill stream gathers fast,
While I bask in shady niches,
And see the brook go past?
What reck I who has title
To the widest lands that be?
They are mine, without requital,
God gave them all to me.

Oh! privilege and blessing,
  To find I ever own,
What great ones, in possessing,
  Imagine theirs alone!
Oh! glory to the Maker,
  Who gave such boon to hold,
Who made me free partaker
  Where others buy with gold!
For while the woods and mountains
  Stand up where I can see,
While God unlocks the fountains,
  'They all belong to me!'

RUSKIN

The Natural Joy of Work

WHEN men are rightly occupied, their amusement grows out of their work, as the colour-petals out of a fruitful flower;—when they are faithfully helpful and compassionate, all their emotions become steady, deep, perpetual, and vivifying to the soul as the natural pulse to the body. But now, having no true business, we pour out our whole masculine energy into the false business of money-making; and having no true emotion, we must have false emotions dressed up for us to play with, not innocently, as children

with dolls, but guiltily and darkly, as the idolatrous Jews with their pictures on cavern walls, which men had to dig to detect. The justice we do not execute, we mimic in the novel and on the stage; for the beauty we destroy in nature, we substitute the metamorphosis of the pantomime, and (the human nature of us imperatively requiring awe and sorrow of *some* kind) for the noble grief we should have borne with our fellows, and the pure tears we should have wept with them, we gloat over the pathos of the police court, and gather the night-dew of the grave.

ROBERT LEIGHTON

Beauty and Rectitude

'TWOULD seem there's some affinity between
Beauty and rectitude. We cannot sway
From truth and virtue, but it draws a screen
Over the face of the day:

The blue sky blurred, and earth's refreshing green,
With hill and dale and cattle-haunted fords,
All dead and hollow as the ochred scene
Round the dramatic boards.

The flowers shut up their wonder from our eyes,
  Their beauty that enchanted us; and books
Refuse to give the deeper sense that lies
    Revealed to virtuous looks.

A soul of artless purity discerns
  Poetic wreathings in prosaic facts,
And finds that universal Nature turns
    To beauty all her facts.

To perfect purity—if such could be—
  This earth were all transparent, the dull clod—
In which we neither life nor beauty see—
    Breathing the living God.

Beauty of nature through the varied year,
  Beauty of truth, of right, of form, of soul—
All beauty is of God—one atmosphere
    That permeates the whole.

Let beauty cease to be our daily food,
  We lose the finer sense of truth and right:
Forsake the holy paths of rectitude,
    And beauty suffers blight.

Duty

I REACH a duty, yet I do it not,
  And therefore see no higher: but if done,
My view is brighten'd, and another spot
    Seen on my moral sun.

For, be the duty high as angel's flight,
  Fulfil it, and a higher will arise,
E'en from its ashes. Duty is infinite—
    Receding as the skies.

And thus it is, the purest most deplore
  Their want of purity. As fold by fold,
In duties done, falls from their eyes, the more
    Of Duty they behold.

Were it not wisdom, then, to close our eyes
  On duties crowding only to appal?
No: Duty is our ladder to the skies,
    And, climbing not, we fall.

GEORGE ELIOT

O MAY I join the choir invisible
  Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.
    This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious

For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

Brother and Sister

LONG years have left their writing on my brow,
But yet the freshness and the dew-fed beam
Of those young mornings are about me now,
When we two wandered toward the far-off stream

With rod and line. Our basket held a store
Baked for us only, and I thought with joy
That I should have my share, though he had more,
Because he was the elder and a boy.

The firmaments of daisies since to me
Have had those mornings in their opening eyes,
The bunched cowslip's pale transparency
Carries that sunshine of sweet memories,

And wild-rose branches take their finest scent
From those blest hours of infantine content.

Thus rambling we were schooled in deepest lore,
And learned the meanings that give words a soul,
The fear, the love, the primal passionate store,
Whose shaping impulses make manhood whole.

Those hours were seed to all my after good;
My infant gladness, through eye, ear, and touch,
Took easily as warmth a various food
To nourish the sweet skill of loving much.

For who in age shall roam the earth and find
Reasons for loving that will strike out love
With sudden rod from the hard year-pressed mind?
Were reasons sown as thick as stars above,

'Tis love must see them, as the eye sees light:
Day is but Number to the darkened sight.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Kensington Gardens

IN this open glade I lie,
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand;
And at its end, to stay the eye,
Those black-crown'd, red-boled pine-trees stand!

Birds here make song, each bird has his,
Across the girdling city's hum.
How green under the boughs it is?
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries come!

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
To take his nurse his broken toy;
Sometimes a thrush flits overhead
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
What endless, active life is here!
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!
An air-stirr'd forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod
Where the tired angler lies, stretch'd out,
And, eased of basket and of rod,
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.

In the huge world, which roars hard by,
Be others happy if they can!
But in my helpless cradle I
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurl'd,
Think often, as I hear them rave,
That peace has left the upper world
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!
When I who watch them am away,
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass,
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.

The Scholar-Gipsy

GO, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill;
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropp'd herbage shoot another head.
But when the fields are still,

And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd green,
Come, shepherd, and again begin the quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of late—
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruse,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use—
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
All the live murmur of a summer day.

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-reap'd field,
And here till sundown, shepherd! will I be.
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils creep;
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again!
The story of the Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy-lore,
And roam'd the world with that wild brotherhood,
And came, as most men deem'd, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life enquired;
Whereat he answer'd, that the gipsy-crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desir'd
The workings of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will.
'And I,' he said, 'the secret of their art,
When fully learn'd, will to the world impart;
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill.'

This said, he left them, and return'd no more.—
But rumours hung about the country-side,
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey,
The same the gipsies wore.

Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring,
At some lone ale-house on the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frock'd boors
Had found him seated at their entering.

But, 'mid their drink and chatter, he would fly.
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer, on thy trace;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
Or in my boat I lie
Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer heats,
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm, green-muffled Cumner hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground!
Thee at the ferry Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the punt's pole chops round;
And leaning backward in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers.
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream.

And then they land, and thou art seen no more!—
Maidens, who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft hast thou given them store
Of flowers— the frail-leaf'd, white anemone,
Dark bluebells drenched with dews of summer eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none hath words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass
Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the glittering Thames,
To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass,
Have often pass'd thee near
Sitting upon the river-bank o'ergrown;
Mark'd thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air—
But, when they came from bathing, thou wast gone!

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate

To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee eyeing, on an April-day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine;
And mark'd thee, when the stars come out and shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood—
Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagg'd and shreds of grey,
Above the forest-ground called Thessaly—
The blackbird, picking food,
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all;
So often has he known thee past him stray,
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd spray,
And waiting for the spark from heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,
Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden bridge,
Wrapt in the cloak and battling within the snow,
Thy face tow'rd Hinksey and its wintry ridge?
And thou hast climb'd the hill,

And gain'd the white brow of the Cumner range;
Turn'd once to watch, while thick the snow-flakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequester'd grange.

But what—I dream! Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wander'd from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy-tribe;
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid—
Some country-nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave
Under a dark, red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!
For what wears out the life of mortal men?
'Tis that from change to change their being rolls;
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls
And numb the elastic powers.
Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tried upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.

Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire;
Else wert thou long since number'd with the dead!
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire!
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou had'st—what we, alas! have not.

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other things;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been baffled, brings.
O life unlike to ours!
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
And each half lives a hundred different lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven! and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,

Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd;
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too?

Yes, we await it!—but it still delays,
And then we suffer! and amongst us one,
Who most has suffer'd, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest! and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear;
With close-lipp'd patience for our only friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbour to despair—
But none has hope like thine!
Thou through the fields and through the woods dost stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts, was rife—
Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude!

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free, onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silver'd branches of the glade—
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales
Freshen thy flowers as in former years
With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales!

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,

Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfit thy powers.
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made:
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles:
As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow
Among the Ægean isles;
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
Green, bursting figs, and tunnies steep'd in brine—
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

The young light-hearted masters of the waves—
And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out more sail;
And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the western straits; and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

AND Wordsworth!—Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice!
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world convey'd,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.
Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!
He too upon a wintry clime
Had fallen—on this iron time
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round;
He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth,
Smiles broke from us and we had ease;
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sunlit fields again;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth returned; for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,
The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
Time may restore us in his course

Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power?
Others will teach us how to dare,
And against fear our breast to steel;
Others will strengthen us to bear—
But who, ah! who, will make us feel?
The cloud of mortal destiny,
Others will front it fearlessly—
But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha, with thy living wave!
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

The Second Best

MODERATE tasks and moderate leisure,
Quiet living, strict-kept measure
Both in suffering and in pleasure—
'Tis for this thy nature yearns.

But so many books thou readest,
But so many schemes thou breedest,
But so many wishes feedest,
That thy poor head almost turns.

And (the world's so madly jangled,
Human things so fast entangled)
Nature's wish must now be strangled
For that best which she discerns.

So it must be! yet, while leading
A strain'd life, while overfeeding,
Like the rest, his wit with reading,
No small profit that man earns,

Who through all he meets can steer him,
Can reject what cannot clear him,
Cling to what can truly cheer him;
Who each day more surely learns

That an impulse, from the distance
Of his deepest, best existence,
To the words, Hope, Light, Persistence,
Strongly sets and truly burns.

Resignation

WE left just ten years since, you say,
That wayside inn we left to-day.
Our jovial host, as forth we fare,
Shouts greeting from his easy chair.
High on a bank our leader stands,
Reviews and ranks his motley bands,

Makes clear our goal to every eye—
The valley's western boundary.
A gate swings to! our tide hath flow'd
Already from the silent road.
The valley-pastures, one by one,
Are threaded, quiet in the sun;
And now beyond the rude stone bridge
Slopes gracious up the western ridge.
Its woody border, and the last
Of its dark upland farms is past—
Cool farms, with open-lying stores,
Under their burnish'd sycamores;
All past! and through the trees we glide,
Emerging on the green hill-side.
There climbing hangs, a far-seen sign,
Our wavering, many-colour'd line;
There winds, upstreaming slowly still
Over the summit of the hill.
And now, in front, behold outspread
Those upper regions we must tread!
Mild hollows, and clear heathy swells,
The cheerful silence of the fells.
Some two hours' march with serious air,
Through the deep noontide heats we fare;
The red-grouse, springing at our sound,
Skims, now and then, the shining ground;
No life save his and ours, intrudes
Upon these breathless solitudes.
O joy! again the farms appear.

Cool shade is there, and rustic cheer;
There springs the brook will guide us down,
Bright comrade, to the noisy town.
Lingering, we follow down; we gain
The town, the highway, and the plain.
And many a mile of dusty way,
Parch'd and road-worn, we made that day;
But, Fausta, I remember well,
That as the balmy darkness fell
We bathed our hands with speechless glee,
That night, in the wide-glimmering sea.

Once more we tread this self-same road,
Fausta, which ten years since we trod;
Alone we tread it, you and I,
Ghosts of that boisterous company.
Here, whence the brook shines, near its head,
In its clear, shallow, turf-fringed bed;
Here, where the eye first sees, far down,
Capp'd with faint smoke, the noisy town;
Here sit we, and again unroll,
Though slowly, the familiar whole.
The solemn wastes of heathy hill
Sleep in the July sunshine still;

The self-same shadows now, as then,
Play through this grassy upland glen;
The loose dark stones on the green way
Lie strewn, it seems, where then they lay;

On this mild bank above the stream,
(You crush them !) the blue gentians gleam.
Still this wild brook, the shining pool !
These are not changed ; and we, you say,
Are scarce more changed, in truth, than they.

The Simple Age

AND yet what days were those, Parmenides !
When we were young, when we could number friends
In all the Italian cities like ourselves,
When with elated hearts we join'd your train,
Ye sun-born Virgins ! on the road of truth,
Then we could still enjoy, then neither thought
Nor outward things were closed and dead to us ;
But we received the shock of mighty thoughts
On simple minds with a pure natural joy ;
And if the sacred load oppress'd our brain,
We had the power to feel the pressure eased,
The brow unbound, the thoughts flow free again,
In the delightful commerce of the world.
We had not lost our balance then, nor grown
Thought's slaves, and dead to every natural joy.
The smallest thing could give us pleasure then—
The sports of the country-people,
A flute-note from the woods,
Sunset over the sea ;

Seed-time and harvest,
The reapers in the corn,
The vinedresser in his vineyard,
The village-girl at her wheel.

Cadmus and Harmonia

FAR, far from here,
The Adriatic breaks in a warm bay
Among the green Illyrian hills ; and there
The sunshine in the happy glens is fair,
And by the sea, and in the brakes,
The grass is cool, the sea-side air
Buoyant and fresh, the mountain flowers
More virginal and sweet than ours.
And there, they say, two bright and aged snakes,
Who once were Cadmus and Harmonia,
Bask in the glens or on the warm sea-shore,
In breathless quiet, after all their ills ;
Nor do they see their country, nor the place
Where the Sphinx lived among the frowning hills,
Nor the unhappy palace of their race,
Nor Thebes, nor the Ismenus, any more.

There those two live, far in the Illyrian brakes !
They had stayed long enough to see,
In Thebes, the billow of calamity
Over their own dear children roll'd,

Curse upon curse, pang upon pang,
For years, they sitting helpless in their home,
A grey old man and woman; yet of old
The Gods had to their marriage come,
And at the banquet all the Muses sang.

Therefore they did not end their days
In sight of blood; but were rapt, far away,
To where the west-wind plays,
And murmurs of the Adriatic come
To those untrodden mountain-lawns; and there
Placed safely in changed forms, the pair
Wholly forgot their first sad life, and home,
And all that Theban woe, and stray
For ever through the glens, placid and dumb.

Self-dependence

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
'Ye who from my childhood up have calm'd me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

'Ah, once more', I cried, 'ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!'

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:
'Wouldst thou be as these are? Live as they.

'Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

'And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

'Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see.'

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
'Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,
Who finds himself, loses his misery!'

BROWNING

The Common Problem

SO, drawing comfortable breath again,
You weigh and find whatever more or less
I boast of my ideal realised
Is nothing in the balance when opposed
To your ideal, your grand simple life,
Of which you will not realise one jot.
I am much, you are nothing ; you would be all,
I would be merely much—you beat me there.

No, friend, you do not beat me,—hearken why.
The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,
Is not to fancy what were fair in life
Provided it could be,—but, finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means—a very different thing !
No abstract intellectual plan of life
Quite irrespective of life's plainest laws,
But one, a man, who is man and nothing more,
May lead within a world which (by your leave)
Is Rome or London—not Fool's paradise.

Then Welcome each Rebuff

THEN welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

MRS. BROWNING

Patience Taught by Nature

'O DREARY life', we cry, 'O dreary life!'
And still the generations of the birds
Sing through our sighing, and the flocks and herds
Serenely live while we are keeping strife
With Heaven's true purpose in us, as a knife
Against which we may struggle! Ocean girds
Unslackened the dry land, savannah-swards
Unweary sweep, hills watch unworn, and rife
Meek leaves drop yearly from the forest trees
To show, above, the unwasted stars that pass
In their old glory: O thou God of old,
Grant me some smaller grace than comes to these!
But so much patience as a blade of grass
Grows by, contented through the heat and cold.

WILLIAM CORY

To a Linnet

MY cheerful mate, you fret not for the wires,
The changeless limits of your small desires;
You heed not winter rime or summer dew,
You feel no difference 'twixt old and new;
You kindly take the lettuce or the cress
Without the cognizance of more or less,
Content with light and movement in a cage.
Not reckoning hours, nor mortified by age,
You bear no penance, you resent no wrong,
Your timeless soul exists in each unconscious song.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

Lebens Philosophie

IF we were but free to wander
Light as mountain cloud or air;
If our love grew firmer, fonder,
And our youth were always fair;
If no thought of sin or scorning
Marred the magic of our morning,
If delight expelled despair:

If the dreadful hand of duty
Lay not on our souls like lead;

If the rose of joy or beauty
  Had no thorn wherewith we bled;
If we could the world refashion
Closer to our own heart's passion,
  And resuscitate the dead:

If all ifs were ours for ever;
  If we held fate in our hand;
If without the least endeavour
  We could do whate'er we planned;—
Tell us, dear ephemeral lovers,
Whom a little black earth covers,
  Who at Pluto's footstool stand,

Tell us could we bear the measure
  Of a bliss beyond our sphere?
Without pain would there be pleasure,
  Joy without or hope or fear?
Youth and beauty, could they thrall us
If old age did not appal us?
  Could we love, if love were clear?

Life is nought for us, frail mortals,
  But through death whereto we tend;
And we cross the heavenly portals
  Only when on earth we bend;
Only what we lose, we cherish;
Only pluck the flowers that perish;
  Only what we have not, spend.

This is wisdom: learn to grasp it:
  Kiss the fickle hour that flies:
If a joy comes do not clasp it:
  Let the dream above thine eyes
Wave its wings in ether sailing:
So shalt thou dwell unbewailing
  Till the sun that sets not rise.

KINGLAKE

The Call of the Wild

IF a man, and an Englishman, be not born of his mother with a natural Chiffney-bit in his mouth, there comes to him a time for loathing the wearisome ways of society—a time for not liking tamed people—a time for not dancing quadrilles—not sitting in pews—a time for pretending that Milton, and Shelley, and all sorts of mere dead people, were greater in death than the first living Lord of the Treasury—a time in short for scoffing and railing—for speaking lightly of the very opera, and all our most cherished institutions. It is from nineteen to two or three and twenty, perhaps, that this war of the man against men is like to be waged most sullenly. You are yet in this smiling England, but you find yourself wending away to the dark sides of her mountains,—climbing the dizzy crags,—exulting in the fellowship of mists and clouds, and watching the storms how they gather, or proving

the mettle of your mare upon the broad and dreary downs, because that you feel congenially with the yet unparcelled earth. A little while you are free, and unlabelled, like the ground that you compass, but Civilization is coming, and coming; you, and your much loved waste lands, will be surely enclosed, and, sooner or later, you will be brought down to a state of utter usefulness—the ground will be curiously sliced into acres, and roods, and perches, and you, for all you sit so smartly in your saddle, you will be caught—you will be taken up from travel, as a colt from grass, to be trained, and tried, and matched, and run. All this in time, but first come continental tours, and the moody longing for Eastern travel; the downs and the moors of England can hold you no longer; with larger stride you burst away from these slips and patches of free land—you thread your way through the crowds of Europe, and at last, on the banks of Jordan, you joyfully know that you are upon the very frontier of all accustomed respectabilities, There, on the other side of the river (you can swim it with one arm), there reigns the people that will be like to put you to death for *not* being a vagrant, for *not* being a robber, for *not* being armed, and houseless. There is comfort in that—health, comfort, and strength to one who is dying from very weariness of that poor, dear, middle-aged, deserving, accomplished, pedantic, and pains-taking governess Europe.

IV

VOICES OF TO-DAY

Happiest if thou submit thy soul to fate,
And set thine eyes and heart on hopes high-born
And divine deeds and abstinence divine.

SWINBURNE.

In the Water

THE sea is awake, and the sound of the song of the joy of her waking is rolled
From afar to the star that recedes, from anear to the wastes of the wild-wide shore.
Her call is a trumpet compelling us homeward: if dawn in her east be acold,
From the sea shall we crave not her grace to re-kindle the life that it kindled before,
Her breath to requicken, her bosom to rock us, her kisses to bless as of yore?
For the wind, with his wings half open, at pause in the sky, neither fettered nor free,
Leans waveward and flutters the ripple to laughter: and fain would the twain of us be
Where lightly the wave yearns forward from under the curve of the deep dawn's dome,
And, full of the morning and fired with the pride of the glory thereof and the glee,
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Life holds not an hour that is better to live in: the past is a tale that is told,

The future a sun-flecked shadow, alive and asleep,
with a blessing in store.
As we give us again to the waters, the rapture of
limbs that the waters enfold
Is less than the rapture of spirit whereby, though
the burden it quits were sore,
Our souls and the bodies they wield at their will
are absorbed in the life they adore—
In the life that endures no burden, and bows not
the forehead, and bends not the knee—
In the life everlasting of earth and of heaven, in the
laws that atone and agree,
In the measureless music of things, in the fervour
of forces that rest or that roam,
That cross and return and re-issue, as I after you
and as you after me
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids
and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

For, albeit he were less than the least of them,
haply the heart of a man may be bold
To rejoice in the word of the sea as a mother's that
saith to the son she bore,
Child, was not the life in thee mine, and my spirit
the breath in thy lips from of old?
Have I let not thy weakness exult in my strength,
and thy foolishness learn of my lore?
Have I helped not or healed not thine anguish, or
made not the might of thy gladness more?

And surely his heart should answer, The light of
the love of my life is in thee.
She is fairer than earth, and the sun is not fairer,
the wind is not blither than she:
From my youth hath she shown me the joy of her
bays that I crossed, of her cliffs that I clomb.
Till now that the twain of us here, in desire of the
dawn and in trust of the sea,
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids
and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Friend, earth is a harbour for winter, a covert
whereunder to flee,
When day is the vassal of night, and the strength
of the hosts of her mightier than he;
But here is the presence adored of me, here my
desire is at rest and at home,
There are cliffs to be climbed upon land, there are
ways to be trodden and ridden: but we
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids
and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Hawthorn Dyke

ALL the golden air is full of balm and bloom
Where the hawthorns line the shelving bank
with flowers.
Joyous children born of April's happiest hours,

High and low they laugh and lighten, knowing their doom,
Brief as brief—to bless and cheer they know not whom,
Heed not how, but washed and warmed with suns and showers
Smile, and bid the sweet soft gradual banks and bowers
Thrill with love of sunlit fire or starry gloom.
All our moors and lawns all round rejoice; but here
All the rapturous resurrection of the year
Finds the radiant utterance perfect, sees the word
Spoken, hears the light that speaks it. Far and near,
All the world is heaven: and man and flower and bird
Here are one at heart with all things seen and heard.

Children

OF such is the kingdom of heaven.
No glory that ever was shed
From the crowning star of the seven
That crown the north world's head,

No word that ever was spoken
  Of human or godlike tongue,
Gave ever such godlike token
  Since human harps were strung.

No sign that ever was given
  To faithful or faithless eyes
Showed ever beyond clouds riven
  So clear a Paradise.

Earth's creeds may be seventy times seven
  And blood have defiled each creed:
If of such be the kingdom of heaven,
  It must be heaven indeed.

The Sweet Wise Death of Old Men Honourable

THE sweet wise death of old men honourable,
  Who have lived out all the length of all their years
Blameless, and seen well-pleased the face of gods,
And without shame and without fear have wrought
Things memorable, and while their days held out
In sight of all men and the sun's great light
Have got them glory and given of their own praise
To the earth that bare them and the day that bred,

Home friends and far-off hospitalities,
And filled with gracious and memorial fame
Lands loved of summer or washed by violent seas,
Towns populous and many unfooted ways,
And alien lips and native with their own.
But when white age and venerable death
Mow down the strength and life within their limbs,
Drain out the blood and darken their clear eyes,
Immortal honour is on them, having past
Through splendid life and death desirable
To the clear seat and remote throne of souls,
Lands indiscoverable in the unheard-of west,
Round which the strong stream of a sacred sea
Rolls without wind for ever, and the snow
There shows not her white wings and windy feet,
Nor thunder nor swift rain saith anything,
Nor the sun burns, but all things rest and thrive;
And these, filled full of life, divine and dead,
Sages and singers, fiery from the god,
And such as loved their land and all things good
And, best beloved of best men, liberty,
Free lives and lips, free hands of men free-born,
And whatsoever on earth was honourable
And whosoever of all the ephemeral seed,
Live there a life no liker to the gods
But nearer than their life of terrene days.
Love thou such life and look for such a death.

SAMUEL WADDINGTON

Human

ACROSS the trackless skies thou may'st not wander;
Thou may'st not tread the infinite beyond;
In peace possess thy soul, reflect and ponder,
Full brief thy gaze tho' Nature's magic wand
Light up an universe, and bid thee wonder!
What though beyond the sea there may be land
Where grows the vine, where blooms the oleander,
Where verdure gleams amid the desert sand,—
Yet not for thee those foreign, fertile spaces,
Remote, unseen, unknown, though known to be!
Thy home is here, and here belovëd faces
Make sweet and fair the home and heart of thee;
Thy home is here, and here thy heart embraces
Life's joy and hope, love, truth, and liberty!

To One in Town

COME back, come back, 'tis Nature bids you come!
Come back once more to tarn and tangled wood,—
Come back to glen, and stream, and torrent flood,—
Come back, and 'mid the woodlands make your home:

Too long you quit the birds, the flowers, the dome
  Of forest-boughs,—the dell, where once you stood
  Life-thrilled, and living knew that life was good;
Too long you miss the bees, the busy hum
  Of painted bodies, and the ceaseless stir
  Of wings,—the sounds, the joy, the passing whirr
Of drone, or dragon-fly,—these, these are thine,
And yet you have them not,—what have you then?
  The dusky shapes, and care-worn ways of men:
Come back, come back, to Nature and her shrine!

Nature's Voices

THE bee goes humming 'mid the honeyed bells;
  The bird of morning, as he upward soars,
  High at the gate of Paradise outpours
His matin melody; the breezy dells
Are carol-haunted; hark, the cuckoo tells
  Of faery worlds unseen; past cottage doors
The rill runs whispering, while full loudly roars
The thundering torrent down the echoing fells.

And these are Nature's voices, these the choir
  That bid the poet join their band and sing;
Thrice-happy choristers, no poet's lyre
  Should mar the rapture that your voices bring:
Sing on, O sing, and let our sole desire
  Be, at your feet, to still lie listening.

Nature

THIS mount shall be our fane, a holy place !
No acolyte shall swing the thurible,
Nor whispering worshipper his rosary tell ;
No priest shall here stand robed in lawn and lace ;
But the Eternal shall look down through space,
And we will gaze and wonder :—it is well !
Here where the heath-flower and the wild thyme dwell,
How sweet is life, how fair, how full of grace !

In place of prayer we'll chant our joyous praise,
And with glad voices sing in Nature's choir :
These lines of fir shall see on Sabbath-days
Our faces flushing with our heart's desire,
As up the mountain-side, through wooded ways,
We seek that peace to which our souls aspire.

Wood-Wanderings

(Summer)

IT is the heat of summer, and I lie
Couched, by the rillet's brink, on mosses green ;
Here 'neath the leafy forest's tangled screen
So cool it is and quiet Time flits by
On noiseless wing where hamadryads sigh,—
Where hyacinth and wind-flower bloom between
The ancient boles of elms, and where unseen

Trim fairies trip in moonlit revelry.
Here kindly Nature to each wandering child
  Bids gracious welcome to her forest-shrine;
'Come ye', she cries, 'ye still unreconciled,
  Come ye, and gather roses, and be mine;
  See, here are orchids, and here's eglantine,
And young buds peeping where the spring has smiled.'

On the Heights

HERE where the heather blooms
  'Neath the blue skies,
Here let us rest awhile,
  What if time flies,—
Joy yet awaiteth us
  Ere the day dies.

See how the pathway creeps
  Round the cliff side;
Serpent-like seemeth it
  Upward to glide:
Here 'mid the heather long
  We will abide.

Nature around us lies
  Placid and still,—
Nature! thy children, we
  Wait on thy will;

Happy and silent here,
  Here on thy hill.

Are we not part of thee,
  Born of thee, thine?
Shall we not come to thee,—
  Kneel at thy shrine?
Nature, we turn to thee,
  Thou art divine.

Peace that is sweet to us,
  Strife for its leaven,
Hate that is hell to us,
  Love that is heaven,—
These for our good, we know,
  Us hast thou given.

Self-love, a secret force
  Goading us on;
Sympathy holding us
  Bound—fast in one,—
Creature to creature linked,
  Father to son.

Hope in the morning, and
  Strength at the noon,
Rest in the eventide,
  These are thy boon;
Sleep, with the darkness, thou
  Sendest, and soon.

Full well thou teachest us
  Where'er we turn,
All that is meet for us
  Earthborn to learn,—
From what is evil here
  Good to discern.

This, too, we learn of thee
  This to be true,—
All things about us, both
  Old things and new,
Pass, and the power of them
  Fades as it grew.

While in the manifold
  Births that unroll,
Shaping the universe,
  Breathes but one soul,—
One long existence,—one
  Infinite whole.

Madrigal

Le città son nemiche, amici i boschi
A'miei pensier.—PETRARCA.

COME, to the woods, love, let us go,
  And roam the forest wide;
There brackens grow and wild-flowers blow,
  And singing birds abide:

There happy are the hearts that love ;
And happy, love, are we,
While there we sing our songs in spring
Beneath the greenwood tree.
With hey, my love ! and ho, my love !
My love she is so bonnie.

There is a nook by Beaulieu brook,
An ivy-cinctured bower,
Where we can dwell in forest dell,
And pluck the budding flower ;
For happy are the hearts that love,
And happy, love, are we,
While still we sing our songs in spring
Beneath the greenwood tree.
With hey, my love ! and ho, my love !
My love she is so bonnie.

Baden-Baden

. . . fiso, ù si mostri, attendi,
L'erba più verde, e l'aria più serena.—PETRARCA.

SYRINGA and wild-roses,
Beneath a sapphire sky !
Here, dearest, Life reposes,
We'll let the Hours slip by ;
What tho' the light discloses
Grey threads amid our hair

Syringa and wild-roses,
  And thou, my Love, art fair.

As in the woods of Arden
  Once dwelt the balm of peace,
And they who sought for pardon
  There found their sorrows cease;
So in this forest-garden,
  Here with the pines alone,
Now Peace shall be our warden,
  And Strife a world unknown.

Here breathes the holy Spirit
  Of Love in bud and flower,
And they who wander near it,
  Shall they not share its dower?
Here we too may inherit
  Of life the holier part—
Love, thine be all the merit,
  And thine the Sacred Heart.

Lux Naturae

LIKE flowers that bloom on the mountains,
  Pure blossoms of daintiest hue;
Like waters of forest-girt fountains,
  With rays of the sun flashing thro',
Is the soul that is free from all bondage, nor fearful of gods or of men.

Who knows not the torment of terror,
Who dreads not the dark gate of Death,
Whom Truth and the freedom from error
Have taught what the Wise Spirit saith,
Stands robed in the raiment of beauty and reigns
o'er the kingdom of souls.

The lilt of the skylark,—the rapture
Of liberty, melody, love,—
It dreams not of lordship or capture,
It heeds not, while soaring above,
The world and its fetters and fashions, its serfdom
and sorrow and sin.

As dew on the uplands at morning,
Fresh tears that the darkness hath shed,
As fair as the sunlight adorning
With halo a young maiden's head,
Is faith in the progress of knowledge,—and trust
in the guidance of Truth.

Joy loves not the darkness, but lingers
By roadside and rillet and brake
When Dawn with her fair rosy fingers
Illumines each meadow and lake;
For Light,—'tis the giver of life, and the sun the
first father of all!

And blessed is he in whose spirit
Light dwells that is pure as the dove,
For he, he alone shall inherit
The crown and the sceptre of Love;
He only shall look on the face, and behold the great beauty, of God.

In the midst of the forest His shrine is;
The shore of the desolate sea
Hath hearkened and knows that divine is
The Voice that from Nature to thee
Still speaks 'mid the lonely recesses, from mountain and desert and mere.

It tells of the infinite beauty
Of life hidden far from the world,
Where Love is sole teacher of Duty,
And Joy with her banner unfurled
Goes forth with the children of light, with the living and loving and true.

All worship in Nature the glory,
The wonder, the grandeur, the peace;
And till Time and the Ages grow hoary
The seasons and years shall not cease
To chant with clear voices immortal the high, holy rapture of life.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT

Contentment in the Dark

WE ask not to be born : 'tis not by will
That we are here beneath the battle-smoke,
Without escape ; by good things as by ill,
By facts and mysteries enchained : no cloak
Of an Elijah, no stars whereupon
Angels ascending and descending shine
Over the head here pillowed on a stone,
Anywhere found ;—so say they who repine.
But each year hath its harvest, every hour
Some melody, child-laughter, strengthening strife,
For mother Earth still gives her child his dower,
And loves like doves sit on the boughs of life.

Ought we to have whate'er we want, in sooth?
To build heaven-reaching towers, find Jacob's stair ;
Alchemists' treasures, everlasting youth,
Or aught that may not stand our piercing air?
Nay, even these are ours, but only found
By Poet in these fabulous vales, due east,
Where grows the amaranth in charmed ground ;
And he it was thenceforth became the Priest,

And raised Jove's altar when the world was young ;
He too it was, in Prophet's vesture stoled,
Spake not but sang until life's roof-tree rung,
And we who hear him still are crowned with gold.

G. J. ROMANES

Simple Nature

BE it not mine to steal the cultured flower
From any garden of the rich and great,
Nor seek with care, through many a weary hour,
Some novel form of wonder to create.
Enough for me the leafy woods to rove,
And gather simple cups of morning dew,
Or, in the fields and meadows that I love,
Find beauty in their bells of every hue.
Thus round my cottage floats a fragrant air,
And though the rustic plot be humbly laid,
Yet, like the lilies gladly growing there,
I have not toil'd, but take what God has made.
My Lord Ambition pass'd, and smil'd in scorn ;
I pluck'd a rose, and, lo ! it had no thorn.

JEFFERIES

The Gamekeeper

IN personal appearance he would be a tall man were it not that he has contracted a slight stoop in the passage of the years, not from weakness or decay of nature, but because men who walk much lean forward somewhat, which has a tendency to round the shoulders. The weight of the gun, and often of a heavy game-bag dragging downwards, has increased this defect of his figure, and, as is usual after a certain age, even with those who lead a temperate life, he begins to show signs of corpulency. But these shortcomings only slightly detract from the manliness of his appearance, and in youth it is easy to see that he must have been an athlete. There is still plenty of power in the long sinewy arms, brown hands, and bull-neck, and intense vital energy in the bright blue eye. He is an ash-tree man, as a certain famous writer would say; hard, tough, unconquerable by wind or weather, fearless of his fellows, yielding but by slow and imperceptible degrees to the work of time. His neck has become the colour of mahogany, sun and tempest have left their indelible marks upon his face; and he speaks from the depth of his broad chest, as men do who talk much in the open air, shouting across the fields and through

the copses. There is a solidity in his very foot-step, and he stands like an oak. He meets your eye full and unshirkingly, yet without insolence; not as the labourers do, who either stare with sullen ill will or look on the earth. In brief, freedom and constant contact with nature have made him every inch a man; and here in this nineteenth century of civilised effeminacy may be seen some relic of what men were in the old feudal days when they dwelt practically in the woods.

EDWARD CARPENTER

In a Manufacturing Town

AS I walked restless and despondent through the gloomy city,

And saw the eager unresting to and fro—as of ghosts in some sulphurous Hades;

And saw the crowds of tall chimneys going up, and the pall of smoke covering the sun, covering the earth, lying heavy against the very ground;

And saw the high refuse heaps writhing with children picking them over,

And the ghastly, half-roofless, smoke-blackened houses, and the black river flowing below;

As I saw these, and as I saw again far away the Capitalist quarter

With its villa residences and its high-walled gardens and its well-appointed carriages, and its face turned away from the wriggling poverty which made it rich ;

As I saw and remembered its drawing-room airs and affectations, and its wheezy pursy Church-going and its gas-reeking heavy furnished rooms and its scent-bottles and its other abominations—

I shuddered :

For I felt stifled, like one who lies half-conscious —knowing not clearly the shape of the evil—in the grasp of some heavy nightmare.

Then out of the crowd descending towards me came a little ragged boy :

Came—from the background of dirt disengaging itself—an innocent wistful child-face, begrimed like the rest but strangely pale, and pensive before its time.

And in an instant (it was as if a trumpet had been blown in that place) I saw it all clearly, the lie I saw and the truth, the false dream and the awakening.

For the smoke-blackened walls and the tall chimneys and the dreary habitations of the poor, and the drearier habitations of the rich, crumbled and conveyed themselves away as if by magic ;

And instead, in the backward vista of that face, I saw the joy of free open life under the sun :

The green sun-delighting earth and rolling sea I saw,

The free sufficing life—sweet comradeship, few needs and common pleasures—the needless endless burdens all cast aside,

Not as a sentimental vision, but as a fact and a necessity existing, I saw

In the backward vista of that face.

Stronger than all combinations of Capital, wiser than all the Committees representative of Labour, the simple need and hunger of the human heart.

Nothing more is needed.

All the books of political economy ever written, all the proved impossibilities, are of no account.

The smoke-blackened walls and tall chimneys duly crumble and convey themselves away;

The falsehood of a gorged and satiated society curlsand shrivels together like a withered leaf,

Before the forces which lie dormant in the pale and wistful face of a little child.

Sunday Morning near a Manufacturing Town

SUNDAY, a still autumn morning, and all the roads on the outskirts are thronged with people.

Where the streets begin to run wild towards the

country, with patch-work of garden-allotments, and occasional hedge-rows and overhanging trees, they go—

Pale-faced men and girls hardly escaped for an hour or two from breathing the eternal smoke.

The sun shines softly—it is very pleasant.

Here comes a whole family: the mother holds a baby to her breast, the father carries a little boy on his arm—two other children play around them;

There go two factory girls, with faded shawls thrown over their heads—their arms round each other's necks; both have clear soft eyes, and both have fawn-coloured opaque skins, marked with the small-pox;

Here, shambling along in the opposite direction a group of ill-made boys, carrying dinner-kerchiefs crammed and purple-stained with blackberries. They have been out early and are returning.

Most of the men stand about in knots on the road or in their gardens, some smoking—some with fox-terriers and coursing-dogs.

Handsomely stand the yellow and the lilac dahlias on their tall stalks; and the marigolds and other flowers look well amid the green. The air is full of the scent of celery.

Some are banking up their celery-beds, some are getting potatoes, others lie on their backs enjoying the lazy air, others are gathering flowers.

Here comes one with a nosegay of all sorts, here another with a great armful of dahlias nodding amid their leaves as he walks, here another with quantities of brown and yellow calceolaria—almost every one has a flower of some sort.

There is plenty of chaff as the groups of young mechanics pass the groups of chatting, laughing girls—some go apart arm in arm together.

Withal the wan look of many faces there is I know not what sense of naturalness and wholesome feeling abroad to-day (the stuffy people are safe out of the way in church).

The air is full of voices and laughter; from some of the neighbouring cottages come sounds of music.

It is well. I welcome you, O crisp, uprising life!

I welcome you, O crisp, green shoot, which the still bright morning has called forth!

It does not need much to see how deep your roots are fed in the strong soil of necessity;

Not much to see how native and fresh a life you indicate,

And that the limp decaying leaves and dead things of the earth will not overlie you much longer.

MICHAEL FAIRLESS

A Song of Low Degree

LORD, I am small, and yet so great,
The whole world stands to my estate,
And in Thine Image I create.
The sea is mine ; and the broad sky
Is mine in its immensity :
The river and the river's gold ;
The earth's hid treasures manifold ;
The love of creatures small and great,
Save where I reap a previous hate ;
The noon-tide sun with hot caress,
The night with quiet loveliness,
The wind that bends the pliant trees,
The whisper of the summer breeze ;
The kiss of snow and rain ; the star
That shines a greeting from afar ;
All, all are mine ; and yet so small
Am I that lo, I needs must call,
Great King, upon the Babe in Thee,
And crave that Thou would'st give to me
The grace of Thy humility.

WATTS-DUNTON.

A talk on Waterloo Bridge

(The last sight of George Borrow)

WE talked of 'Children of the Open Air,'
Who once on hill and valley lived aloof,
Loving the sun, the wind, the sweet reproof
Of storms, and all that makes the fair earth fair,
Till, on a day, across the mystic bar
Of moonrise, came the 'Children of the Roof,'
Who find no balm 'neath evening's rosiest woof,
Nor dews of peace beneath the Morning Star.
We looked o'er London, where men wither and choke,
Roofed in, poor souls, renouncing stars and skies,
And lore of woods and wild wind prophecies,
Yea, every voice that to their fathers spoke:
And sweet it seemed to die ere bricks and smoke
Leave never a meadow outside Paradise.

A Starry Night at Sea

IF heaven's bright halls are very far from sea,
I dread a pang the angels could not 'suage:
The imprisoned sea-bird knows, and only he,
How drear, how dark, may be the proudest cage.
Outside the bars he sees a prison still:
The self-same wood or mead or silver stream
That lends the captive lark a joyous thrill

Is landscape in the seabird's prison-dream.
So might I pine on yonder starry floor
For sea-wind, deaf to all the singing spheres ;
Billows like these, that never knew a shore,
Might mock mine eyes and tease my hungry ears ;
No scent of amaranth, moly, or asphodel,
In lands that bloom above yon glittering vault,
Could sooth me if I lost this briny smell,
This living breath of Ocean, sharp and salt.

Nature's Fountain of Youth

(A morning swim off Guernsey with a Friend)

AS if the Spring's fresh groves should change and shake
To dark green woods of Orient terebinth,
Then break to bloom of England's hyacinth,
So 'neath us change the waves, rising to take
Each kiss of colour from each cloud and flake
Round many a rocky hall and labyrinth,
Where sea-wrought column, arch, and granite plinth,
Show how the sea's fine rage dares make and break.
Young with the youth the sea's embrace can lend,
Our glowing limbs, with sun and brine empearled,
Seem born anew, and in your eyes, dear friend,
Rare pictures shine, like fairy flags unfurled,
Of child-land, where the roofs of rainbows bend
Over the magic wonders of the world.

The Language of Nature's Fragrancy

(The Tiring-room in the Rocks)

THESE are the 'Coloured Caves' the sea-maid built;
Her walls are stained beyond that lonely fern,
For she must fly at every tide's return,
And all her sea-tints round the walls are spilt.
Outside behold the bay, each headland gilt
With morning's gold; far off the foam-wreaths burn
Like fiery snakes, while here the sweet waves yearn
On sand more soft than Avon's sacred silt.
And smell the sea! no breath of wood or field,
From lips of may or rose or eglantine,
Comes with the language of a breath benign,
Shuts the dark room where glimmers Fate revealed,
Calms the vext spirit, balms a sorrow unhealed,
Like scent of seaweed rich of morn and brine.

Poetry and Prose

(From 'Idylls of Tent and Caravan')

I

THE camp is on the mossy marge of Ouse,
And while the little rosy currents swirl
Past tremulous lily-cups of gold and pearl,
Two fishers bathed in morning's magic hues—

A gorgio boy, rapt by Earth's rapturous news
Of sunrise, as the kindling cloud-shapes curl—
And Shuri Lee the bright-eyed Romany girl—
Stand watching coloured floats amid the dews.

The sun's rim flares and makes the village spire
A cone of gold—and now a cone of fire,
And turns to a goldfish every perch and bream
The girl pulls out.
The boy—what charms his eyes?
He sees in glowing caves of the Eastern skies
The song-god's mystic summons in a dream.

II

His float is snatched! . . . Where has his spirit gone?
Beyond the topmost lark, though that proud bird
Moves like a midge where ruddy streams are stirred,
Up, up on pinions that at last have won
The strand the sons of Phœbus light upon
Who hear the Voice the Grecian poets heard—
Yea, catch the secret of Apollo's word
And drink from living springs of Helicon.

'A bite!' she cries, and grasps his bending rod:
A roach soon tosses glittering on the sod.
'Why, pal, you're dazed—your yockers burn so bright!'
'Hark to that music, Shuri, see that sight;
I've caught the song-god's secret—seen the god'.
'A god? Dabla! he made you miss that bite.'

SIR LEWIS MORRIS

Comfort

THO' love be bought and honour sold,
The sunset keeps its glow of gold,
And round the rosy summits cold
The white clouds hover, fold on fold.

Tho' over-ripe the nations rot,
Tho' right be dead and faith forgot,
Tho' one dull cloud the heavens may blot,
The tender leaf delayeth not.

Tho' all the world be sunk in ill,
The bounteous autumns mellow still,
By virgin sand and sea-worn hill
The constant waters ebb and fill.

From out the throng and stress of lies,
From out the painful noise of sighs,
One voice of comfort seems to rise
It is the meaner part that dies.

The Ode of Perfect Years

NOW flower and perfect fruit
Together dress the tree,
High midsummer has come, midsummer mute
Of song, but rich to scent and sight.

The sun rides high in heaven, the skies are bright
And full of blessedness,
High hope and wild endeavour
Have fled or sunk for ever;
Only the swifter seasons onward press,
And every day that goes
Is a full-scented, full-blown garden rose,
Orbéd, complete.
And every hour brings its own burden sweet
Of daily duty, precious care;
Wherefrom the visible landscape calm and clear
Shows finer far, and the high heaven more near,
Than ever morning skies of sunrise were.
I miss the unbounded hope of old,
The freshness and the glow of youth;
I miss the fever and the fret,
The luminous haze of gold.
I see a mind clearer and calmer yet,
A more unselfish love, a more unclouded truth;
Such gain I take, and this
More gracious shows and fair than that I miss.

WHO reaps the harvest of his soul,
And garners up thought's golden grain,
In vain for him life's tempests rave,
Fate's rude shocks buffet him in vain.

The Ode of Life

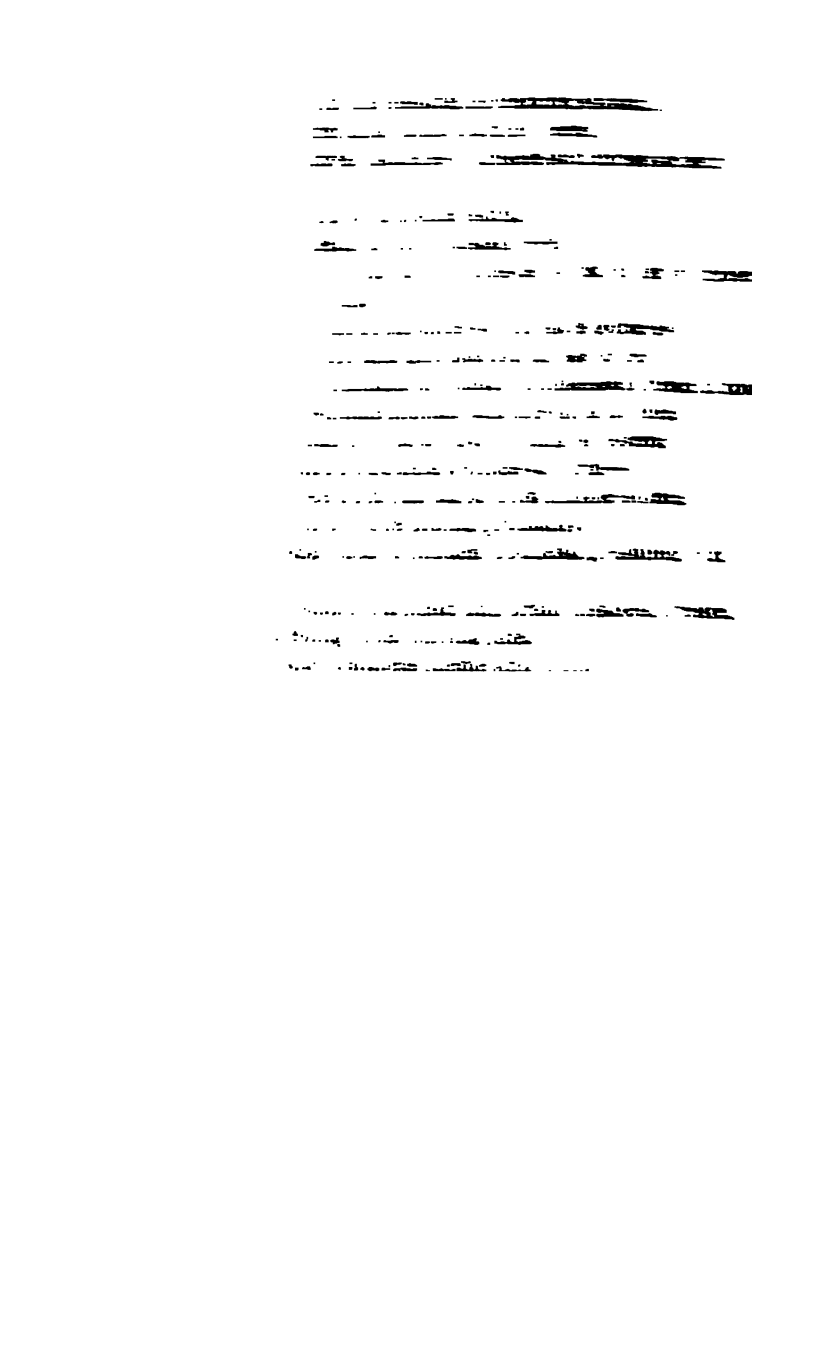
TOIL is the law of life, and its best fruit;
This from the uncaring brute
Divides; this and the prescient mind whose store
Grows daily more and more.
Toil is the mother of wealth,
The nurse of health;
Toil 'tis that gives the zest
To well earned rest;
The law of life laid broad and deep
As are the fixed foundations of the sea,
The medicine of grief, the remedy,
Wherefrom Life giveth his beloved sleep.

Oh labour truly blest!
Thou rulest all the race;
Over all the toiling earth I see thy gracious face
Stand forth confest.
Wherever thou art least,
In those fair lands beneath the tropic blaze,
The slothful savage, likened to the beast,
Drags on his soulless length of days;
Where most thou art,
Man rises upward to a loftier height,
And views the earth and heaven with clearer sight,
And holds a cleaner heart.

But to ends nobler still
The nobler workers of the world are bent.
It is not best in an inglorious ease
To sink and dull content,
When wild revolts and hopeless miseries
The unquiet nations fill;
It is not best to rot
In dull observance, while the bitter cry
Of weak and friendless sufferers rends the sky,
Wailing their hopeless lot;
Or rest in coward fear on former gain,
Making old joys supply the present pain.

Nay, best it is indeed
To spend ourselves upon the general good;
And, oft misunderstood,
To strive to lift the knees and limbs that bleed;—
This is the best, the fullest meed.
Let ignorance assail or hatred sneer;
Who loves his race he shall not fear;
He suffers not for long,
Who doth his soul possess in loving, and grows strong.

Oh, student! far into the night
From youth to age
Bent low upon the blinding page,
Content to catch some gleam of light;
Art thou not happy, though the world pass by?—



Or who, in daily labour's trivial round,
Their fitting work have found;
Or who on high, guiding the car of State,
Are set, a people's envy and their pride,
Who, spurning rank and ease and wealth,
And setting pleasure aside and health,
And meeting contumely oft and hate,
Have lived laborious lives and all too early died.

Ay, labour, thou art blest,
From all the earth, thy voice, a constant prayer,
Soars upward day and night;
A voice of aspiration after right;
A voice of effort yearning for its rest,
A voice of high hope conquering despair!

JOHN MASEFIELD

A Wanderer's Song

A WIND'S in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon-wheels;
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting on the sand.